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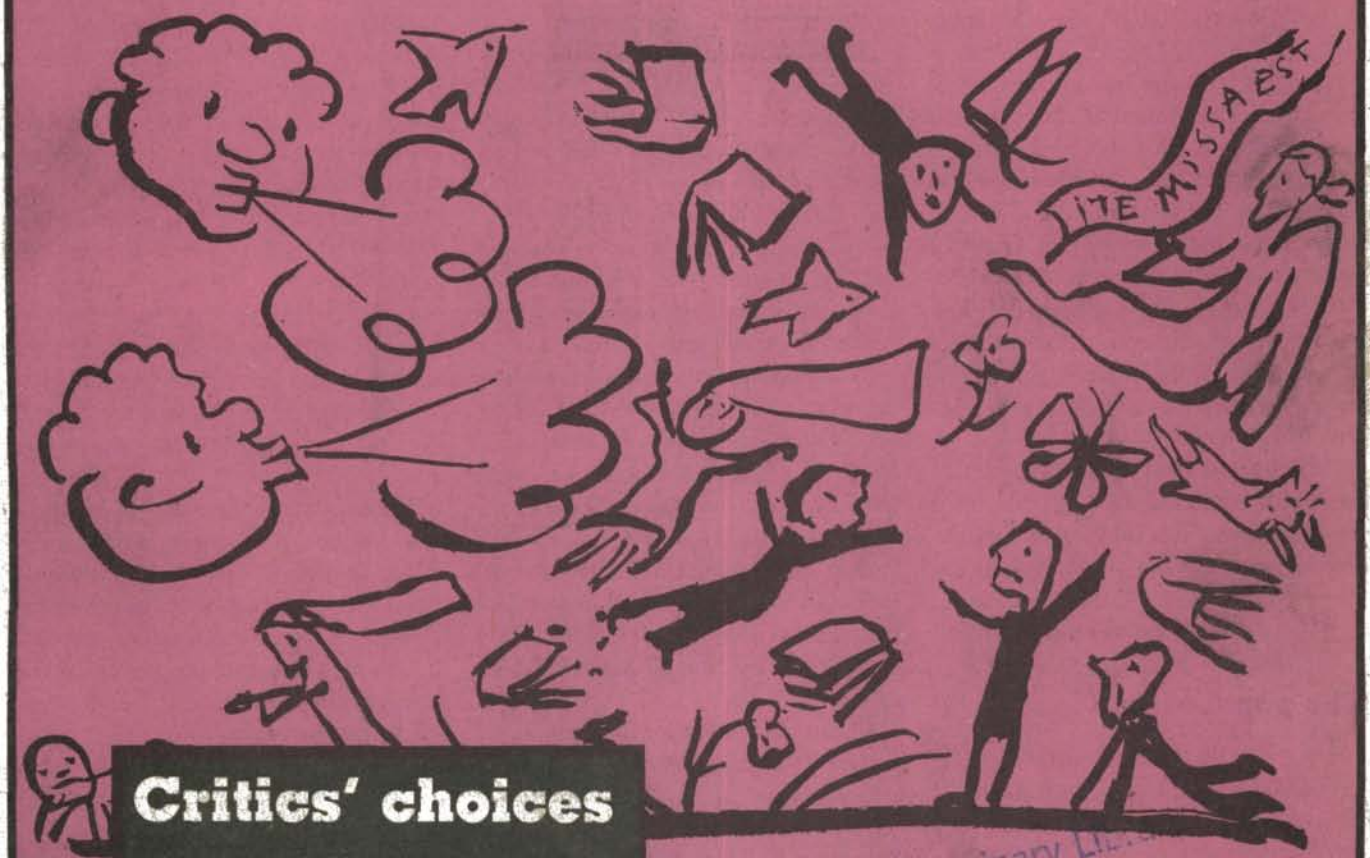

Critics' choices

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CORRESPONDENCE

Naming the animals

Uxbridge, Ontario

To the Editors: I want to congratulate *Commonweal* for its recognition of the animal rights movement, and of the movement's relevance to religion, ethics, and pandemic violence in the modern world ["Dominion over the Earth," by Gabriel Moran, December 4].

Though I am not in complete agreement with Dr. Moran on every point (I am probably a little more radical than he), I wholeheartedly endorse his gist. In Romans 8:22-26, Saint Paul speaks beautifully of the way Spirit cries out to God on our behalf. It is all creation, however, not merely the human creation, on whose behalf the Spirit pleads. And the Latin has this lovely ambiguity: *omnia creatura* may also mean every (individual) creature.

My husband and I became vegetarians on ethical grounds some four years ago. I cannot tell you how moving and gratifying it is to have our "witness" recognized.

LESLIE JEAN COULTHARD

The papal visit

San Francisco, Calif.

To the Editors: As I sat and watched the U.S. papal visit, from Miami to Detroit, my feelings were extremely ambivalent. I admire the man who lived through Nazi and Communist domination of his native Poland. I have nothing but praise for his stand on peace and nuclear disarmament, and for sharing the world's food products among nations.

However, on women and family issues, he goes back prior to Vatican II. I wondered how he felt as he watched many women serve as lectors or Eucharistic ministers for his Masses in eleven cities. How many women were involved in preparing the liturgy and music for those Masses? In San Francisco, women even wove the fabric for the vestments he wore.

In my parish, we have twenty lectors and fifteen Eucharistic ministers who are women. Many of our parishioners who can no longer attend Mass would go without the Eucharist without us. Does the pope, or the curia, feel that deprivation of Communion to these shut-ins is worth the deprivation of women to assist in the ministry?

Some years ago, I saw an altar girl and an altar boy serve the priest at Mass in a chapel at a NATO command post in Germany. My delight was that it finally had happened! Growing up in the thirties and forties, I never dreamed of being a priest. I only longed to be an altar girl, lighting the candles before Mass and reciting the Latin responses which I can still do from memory.

Whatever happens in Rome, whatever decisions come down from the curia, I am a stubborn Catholic who will never leave my church. No one man, be he priest, cardinal, or pope will ever come between me and God. . . . [I will] persevere in spite of current conflict over the lack of caring about the laity or women at the recent synod ["Don't Call Us, We'll Call You," by Abigail McCarthy, December 4].

Cheers for Abigail McCarthy's succinct and moving article.

ANN MARIE DAY

Bravos & laughs

Brooklyn Heights, N.Y.

To the Editors: I can't—and I don't want to—refrain from launching a burst of bravos at the December 18 issue, in many ways the best I've seen yet. David Carlin's piece (the only serious treatment of this subject I've found anywhere); Coleman's review; John Judis's enlightening revelations (or confirmations!); the general high literary standard—and on and on. Not to mention Robert Bell's really funny stuff—and that telling cover! I especially like the *perestroikish* new type dress, with its ample line leading and banishment of eye-blearying 8 pt. type. Onward and upward.

MORTIMER FRANKEL

Pastorals on Sundays

Chicago, Ill.

To the Editors: Both December 18 articles on the economic pastoral ["Resurrecting the Common Good," and "What's Become of the Pastoral?"] were most welcome. Karen Sue Smith's list of materials and programs mentioned one of our publications, for which we are grateful. Her description of *The Pastorals on Sundays,* however, was incomplete. This book was first published in a 1987-88 edition. For each Sunday between March 8 of 1987 and February 14 of 1988, the book includes the following: citations for the three Sunday Scriptures and a one-line description of each reading, a paragraph from *The Challenge of Peace,* a paragraph from *Economic Justice for All.*

The quotations from the pastoral letters were selected on the basis of some shared image with the Sunday's Scriptures. The book is intended as a way for homilists to make connections between the church's teaching on peace and the economy, on the one hand, and the lectionary on the other.

A second book for the year — from

(Continued on page 158)

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COMMONWEAL

Sollicitudo rei socialis

John Paul II will variously provoke, irritate, and hearten many people with his seventh encyclical, *The Social Concern of the Church*. His wide-ranging and compelling analysis of the continuing lag in third-world development commemorates the twentieth anniversary of Paul VI's *Populorum Progressio*, but goes far beyond it. John Paul's tone is more urgent and stark than that of his predecessor's, reflecting as he says, the fact that "hopes for development" are "very far from being realized."

The letter cites many causes for continuing underdevelopment—"from grave omissions on the part of the developing nations themselves" to international "economic, financial, and social mechanisms which...often function almost automatically." But finally it focuses on one. And it is this pivotal and neuralgic point that will certainly cause controversy: "The existence of two opposing blocs, commonly known as the East and the West," whose political, ideological, and military struggles transferred to the developing nations..."helps to widen the gap already existing on the economic level between North and South." This is why, writes the pope, the "church's social doctrine adopts a critical attitude towards both liberal capitalism and Marxist collectivism." Furthermore, he detects in each of the two blocs "a tendency towards imperialism."

William Safire, in a first critical reaction (*New York Times*, February 22, 1988), detects in this rhetorical evenhandedness a simplistic view of the world and a craven effort to curry favor with the third world, a tactic which, he believes, will only serve to "enshrine the rhetoric of resentment." Specifically, Safire is outraged at the equation of the superpowers' responsibility for the baleful conditions of the third world. Americans do not take kindly to being called an imperialistic power, particularly by a "foreigner," and Safire's ire reflects that national trait.

But it would be a mistake to see in the encyclical's criticism of the West's responsibility for continuing underdevelopment either a "collectivist" mentality or a dismissal of democratic institutions. What the letter reflects is, in fact, an old problem—nations with estimable political institutions at home may act abroad in ways that deny those values. Our intentions and our hopes for the political and economic future of the third world may be laudable. But it is the political and military struggle between the Soviets and the West, which is actually misshaping that future by exacerbating local conflicts, by diverting development funds to military uses, and by encouraging the arms trade. In this criticism, does the pope deny the values of democratic political institutions and, as Safire has it, side with third-world "dictatorships, oligarchies, and juntas"?

A close reading of *The Social Concern of the Church* turns up criticisms of single-party states, of bureaucratic control of economies, and of the stultifying effects of illiteracy, discrimination, and exploitation—in other words, descriptions

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of Eastern Europe and a host of developing nations in Africa, Latin America, and Central America. In the pope's analysis the brightest future of the third world lies in building institutions and practices analogous to those of liberal democracy, including limited government, individual rights, participatory political processes, and systems that foster individual economic initiatives. The encyclical says that the West's struggle with the Soviets is impeding that process. It is an honest criticism— one of many, painful as they may be—to which we must attend.

NATIONAL AMNESIA

Kurt Waldheim has declared himself, "not guilty." Responding to the report of the official commission established to look into his wartime record, the president of Austria declared that the report was a "clear statement saying that I am not guilty of war crimes and that knowledge is not a crime." In a man-on-the-street interview, one of his fellow countrymen more candidly assessed the position of Waldheim and of Austria itself, "If knowledge is a crime, they should lock all of us up."

After many years of hiding his military service, and many more months of denying any role in wartime atrocities, Waldheim now appears to concede that he knew of the numerous violations of human rights and international law about which the commission report speaks. His work as a translator and officer, the report says, made Waldheim "one of the staff members who was especially well-informed. Thus his general insights were comprehensive. They related not only to tactical, strategic, and administrative orders, but in some cases also included actions and measures which contradicted military law and the principles of humanity."

The commission's cautious conclusions have not ended the matter. Waldheim and his supporters believe they have been vindicated; he will not resign. His opponents, including the prime minister and many prominent business people ardently wish for his departure because the controversy is disrupting the government and sullying Austria's international image. Opponents and supporters alike seem unprepared to deal with the substance of the accusations against Waldheim—and in a larger sense against Austria itself.

German troops marched into Austria on March 11, 1938—fifty years ago this week. *Commonweal* carried a report of the event by George Shuster, then traveling in Europe. He provides an account that leaves little room to doubt that even in 1938, the attacks on the Jewish population were vicious and terrifying, and that dissenters to National Socialism had reason to fear for their lives. We reprint his account below.

In retrospect, the *Anschluss*, has been described as the "rape of Austria." It is true that Hitler, afraid that Austrians would prefer independence, forced the government to accept incorporation into a greater Germany. Nonetheless, many Austrians quickly embraced Nazism. The nation had long nurtured a home-grown fascism and anti-Semitism, linked to the "national Catholicism" Shuster mentions. it was a tradition that instructed Hitler in his Austrian youth, that supported the authoritarian regime which seized power in 1934, and that scrambled to welcome the Nazi German forces in 1938.

Austria's own responsibility for this past has never been acknowledged and repented. Unlike Germany, it never went through war crimes trials and a period of re-education. Unlike France, its collaborators were never exposed. Nor, unlike the United States, has it produced persistent, if few, voices of conscience like those raised against the fire-bombing of German cities, the internment of Japanese-Americans, the failure to mount rescue efforts for victims of the Holocaust, and the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Austria never had to account for its wartime acts, and was quickly welcomed back into the bosom of the civilized West—the better to battle against "godless Communism." But the cost is apparent even now—above all in the suppurative anti-Semitism with which many Austrians have reacted to the charges against Waldheim, and in the splendid obtuseness with which Waldheim has proclaimed himself vindicated.

FIFTY YEARS AGO

TERROR IN VIENNA
AN EYEWITNESS ACCOUNT

Editor's note: The following is reprinted from the April 15, 1938 issue of Commonweal. *See the editorial above.*

We have passed through a week of harrowing experiences, still so vivid in the memory that I can hardly bring myself to write about them. It is one thing to see blood spilled, and another to watch the soul of man writhe in torment and then die.

I happened to be touring the provinces with an Austrian journalist. There were Nazi demonstrations in almost all towns, but nowhere excepting possibly in Styria did they serve any other purpose than to show that the strength of Hitler's support had been greatly exaggerated. Workers, including many embittered former Social Democrats, were flocking to the Schuschnigg colors, and it seemed quite possible that in two weeks the gulf between the Catholic party and labor would be healed. Later on I was to regret having gone on this reconnoitering trip, but the fact that I went at least enables me to declare without any hesitancy whatsoever that the situation was fully under the government's control, that the plebiscite was being organized with the utmost fairness, and that every sign pointed to a severe Nazi defeat. All stories and rumors to the contrary are fabrications. It is true that some pressure was brought to bear on civil servants, and that the government was

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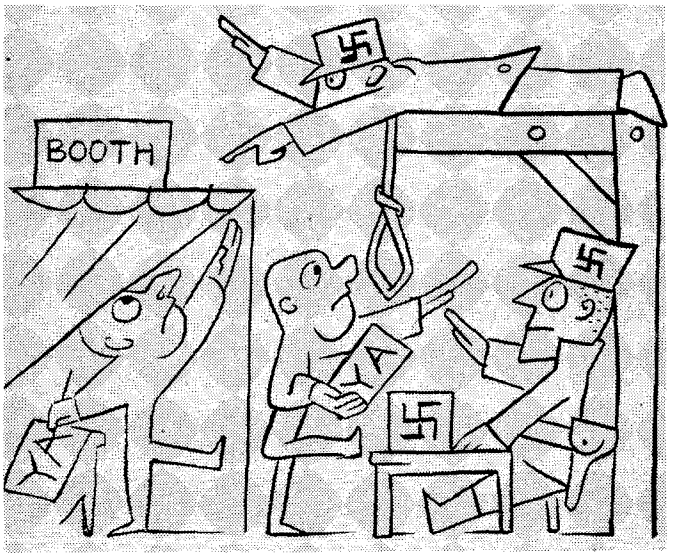
in control of most of the instruments of propaganda. But in every other respect the road to the polls was so unobstructed that one had difficulty in realizing that Austria was not a democratic state.

We drove on through mountainous and sparsely settled country, so that we arrived in Graz late at night on March 11, utterly unaware that the government had yielded to Hitler's ultimatum. There we ran headlong into a delirious Nazi demonstration. The car was surrounded by a crowd of schoolboys carrying any number of assorted weapons. "Jews! Jews!" resounded on all sides, and it was only by dint of displaying a measure of good feeling which I did not possess that we were able to extricate ourselves and leave for Vienna despite the hour and a blinding snowstorm. Almost every mile of what seemed the longest trip on record was interrupted with shouts. Boys armed with rifles and bayonets leaped from the roadside and insisted upon inspecting our passports and our political opinions. Once we lost our bearings and instead of keeping to the main highway drove up to a Franciscan monastery. When the error had been corrected, there gathered round us in that darkness a band of armed youngsters the oldest of whom was seventeen. They insisted upon searching the car for "treasures" which they thought we were escorting to safety.

At last we reached Vienna at five in the morning. The city, which had never boasted of more than a few thousand active Nazis, was asleep excepting for a small group of the faithful still congregated before the German tourist bureau in the Kaerntnerstrasse, inside which a huge portrait of Hitler was banked with flowers. But there was little time for slumber. An hour later German bombers began to "demonstrate" over the city. They swooped down so close to the housetops that every other sound was drowned out. Round about, groups of high school boys began to mount guard. Directly across the street from us, for example, two urchins in knee pants stood with rifles and bayonets looking for all the world like boy scouts run amok. The vanguard of the German army, seated in trucks and armed to the teeth, began to roar through the streets. Terrorization was in progress — the method adopted for enforcing submission by creating what can be defined as absolute insecurity.



Plebiscite in Austria
Commonweal, April 15, 1938

In order to understand what this means one must remember that probably less than a third of Vienna's population can qualify as German according to Nazi principles. For all these people the borders had been hermetically sealed the night before. The coup had come so suddenly that Austria was a huge trap. By eight in the morning every resident American in the city had a swarm of visitors asking the impossible. They begged for aid in cajoling passports out of the embassy or in being smuggled out of the country. I have never seen so much despair and frenzy in all my life. Meanwhile more and more thousands of Germans were brought to Vienna. Police, black shirts and brown shirts, soldiers and officials — all these were impressive, but most striking of all were the masses of organized school children brought down by train and truck to demonstrate when Hitler arrived. Soon the otherwise quiet and dignified city became a veritable bedlam. All day and all night the roar continued, rendering sleep an incredible luxury.

The pogrom followed. Jewish shops were plundered and smashed. Houses were entered and ransacked. Individuals were pursued on the streets. Property was confiscated without a moment's warning. Whole streets looked as if a tornado had passed along. But far worse than all this was the horrible despair which unnerved hundreds of thousands — a despair so omnipresent that suicide was a normal recourse. People stabbed or shot themselves to death on the very streets. I shall say no more about it excepting this: an American monsignor and I walked along together wondering whether even Christianity can subdue the beast in man. Cruelty surrounded us, massed, exultant, and victorious. I know now what Calvary means.

Catholics, too, felt the brunt of the attack. It must be conceded that the church in Austria bore a thousand visible signs of degeneration. Generations of living out of the hand of the state had engendered a laxity and a softness hard to understand if one hales from a country where the faith has been defended. But since 1933 regeneration had made progress. A group of vigorous young priests and laymen had put their shoulders to the wheel, and things were slowly moving in the right direction. Today any dreams they may have cherished of a religious restoration are at an end in so far as the corporate life of society is concerned. Many of them are in prison. Others managed by a hairbreadth to escape the country. The careers of thousands are wrecked. The church must now learn anew out of the school of darkness.

Nevertheless, when Hitler entered the city, the bells of St. Stephen's Cathedral rang out in welcome. I do not wish to judge harshly, but I doubt whether in all history there is a more shameless incident. It was for many of my acquaintances who sensed the full moral ignominy of what was happening round about, just as if Christ had really made a pact with Satan in the hour of temptation. Nevertheless this incident is offset in my memory by the unforgettable heroism of many, priests and people, who risked all rather than betray the faith in which

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charity takes precedence over everything.

Then there is the world of beauty and gentleness, or urbanity and artistic excellence, which has looked upon Vienna as its home. Down upon it all the tides of barbarism descended, with goose-step and primitive mummery. On Sunday morning I went as usual to the Hofkapelle to hear the boys sing high Mass. But when the priest ascended the altar there was no singing — the streets were so blocked with German Nazis that the choir had been unable to get through. There were tears in the eyes of almost everyone. I thought of what Grey had said in 1914: "The lights are going out all over Europe, and it will be a long time until they burn again." This silence in the Hofkapelle, what was it other than a symbol of the gloom into which we have gone and are perchance going? Children's voices were not raised in song. Instead youngsters patrolled the streets with bayonets.

I was so shaken by this experience that for hours I walked about aimlessly, hardly noticing the shouting and the roaring and the click of steel. All this was merely external. What mattered was not what had come, but what had gone — the values of Christendom no longer earned but merely inherited, now to be struggled for tenaciously again through long generations with quiet heroism, self-sacrifice, and martyrdom. These values must be rescued not only through the present difficult times but through the even more perilous days ahead. For there is nobody over here now who doubts that Europe is on the brink of irreparable disaster.

I can only appeal to the generous heart of America as best I can for immediate aid. Every cent expended on relief work now will not only mitigate human suffering but will save minds and hands for the Christian regeneration of society. It is so great an opportunity that it is difficult to think of anything comparable. Should these words of mine awaken any measure of response, the experience of having lived through that week in Vienna will have been worthwhile. I am not pleading for humanity in the abstract, but for dozens upon dozens of individuals whose only offense is that they are partly of Jewish blood — as Christ was of Jewish blood — or that they have loved the church more than all else.

There is one thing more. The German war machine which rumbled through Austria is a surprisingly efficient organization. It may not be everything the Imperial army was in 1914, but it has discipline and equipment. To it the conquest of Austria is of tremendous advantage. In all human probability there would have been neither such an army nor such a conquest without two great factors — Hitlerism and a certain "national Catholicism." The second prepared the way both in Germany and in Austria. I think we must look both facts squarely in the face. It is foolhardy to deny that the Nazi creed occupies the same central position in the world outlook that Bolshevism did after the war. And just as certain extremist Catholics turned much too far to the left under the impact of Communism, so others have moved rightward without reservations under the spell of chauvinism and Hitlerism.

Why this should be when Christian principle is so plain and uncompromising, remains somewhat of a mystery even after one has tried to study the evolution of modern ideas. There must be a fault somewhere not in the structure of our social ethics but in our pedagogy. America still has time and opportunity to discover where the mistake lies and to rectify it. That having been done, we may not be able to halt the triumph of destructive forces, but can at least prevent their emergence to victory through the Catholic gate. That may seem like a fairly remote and impractical program. I can assure you that no other course of action would be comparably beneficent.

GEORGE N. SHUSTER

George N. Shuster joined the editorial staff of Commonweal *in 1926, and served as managing editor from 1928-37.*

BUDGET '89

WHERE THE MONEY GOES

GUNS & INDEBTEDNESS

A basic rule of the federal budget process is that the president proposes, but the Congress disposes. Until the mid-seventies, however, the White House actually had the upper hand because it was the only one with an Office of Management and Budget (OMB), able to develop a federal budget.

Congress finally got its own budget-making capacity during a Nixon presidency weakened by Watergate. In the same law designed to control Nixon's practice of "impounding" money, Congress also established a budget timetable, a Congressional Budget Office (CBO), powerful budget committees in each body, and the staff and computers to go with both. Since then, the budget submitted to Congress each year by the president is only the opening salvo in an increasingly rancorous debate.

Last year's budget warfare raged between the White House and Congress almost until Christmas. The final catch-all spending bill was signed on December 22, three months into fiscal year 1988 (and incorporating basic agreements worked out on the budget for FY 1989). On February 18, 1988, when the president officially sent Congress his FY 1989, $1.1 trillion budget, it was already clear to all concerned that this year the process would be different.

That's largely because FY 1988's eleventh-hour budget compromise covered two fiscal years, 1988-89. Congress and the White House can—and will—still argue over the details, but the broad outlines of the budget were settled in December: growth in military spending is slowed; $14 billion will come from new taxes; and "non-defense discretionary spending" (domestic spending apart from trust fund programs) is to be largely spared further cuts.

For those who work with and care about low-income people, the best news in the budget is found between the lines. The

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simple fact that the president's wish list of programs to eliminate (seventeen—down from forty or fifty last year) or drastically cut (seventeen) is shorter, helps low-income advocates. Unlike every other year of the Reagan presidency, this year advocates won't have to spend scarce energy and resources fighting for the survival of benefits like legal services or food stamps. That's worth a lot.

The programs the president says he wants eliminated include some, such as the Economic Development Administration, Work Incentive Program, Urban Development Action Grants, Small Business Administration loans, and subsidies for Amtrak, able to defend themselves and not as basic to survival as welfare and Medicaid. And among the programs slated for reductions, some—mass transit, rural housing, and community development grants—were proposed to make room for a NASA space station. In an election year, chances are good that Congress will vote for buses in their neighborhoods rather than a station in outer space.

Like the presidential candidates, the White House seems eager to appear more "compassionate," so it's possible to see budget increases for items such as AIDS (research, education, and treatment); dealing with the drug problem (enforcement, education, and treatment); some education programs; and "worker readjustment."

Mind you, this budget has its share of bad news: it includes budget increases for the super-collider, Star Wars, and the *contras*, along with cuts for a variety of programs providing energy assistance, library aid, a variety of health-related efforts, refugee assistance, and grants to cities, social services, child-abuse prevention, and other special needs. Among the most perverse reductions are those related to housing—an area that cries out for more; not fewer, federal dollars.

It's worth bearing in mind that the engine driving this budget remains a bloated military—one that now consumes roughly half the general tax revenues coming into the Treasury—and a deficit that absorbs roughly one-third. That means almost 85 percent goes to those items alone.

We won't see the usual dispute between Congress and the White House over economic forecasts. Normally that's good for several weeks' wrangling, but this year Congress shows little interest in challenging OMB's somewhat rosier predictions for economic growth, low interest rates, or the size of the deficit, even though the predictions of its own CBO are less optimistic. That's not so surprising: gloomier predictions would mean that Congress would have to come up with more revenues (a.k.a. taxes), and more programs to cut—a choice it is not likely to make as voters head for the polls.

Unfortunately, a "tidier" budget process isn't necessarily a better one. Year after year, the nation's policy-makers lower the deficit artificially—through numbers games and phony economic assumptions. While there's something to be said for having Democrats and Republicans alike eager to settle the budget quickly in the form of thirteen appropriations bills, last-minute, catch-all spending bills are a poor way to do legislative business. Without a restructuring of our tax system and a reordering of our national priorities, we are left with a future held hostage to the deficit, and a budget that's incapable of responding to basic human needs. That's too high a price for efficiency.

NANCY AMIDEI

Nancy Amidei has written frequently on poverty, hunger, and human services issues in these pages.

OF SEVERAL MINDS David R. Carlin, Jr.

CREEPING NEUTRALISM

THE FEAR OF PASSING JUDGMENTS

When I was a boy, Taft Republicans (Robert, not William Howard — it has been a long time since I was a boy, but not *that* long) used to talk about something called "creeping socialism," a beast that had apparently made great, creeping advances during the age of FDR and Truman.

I never shared the apprehension of the Taftites about this particular creeper (a.k.a. New Deal liberalism), but I have always thought that the "creeping" aspect of their concept was a useful idea. After all, there are many social changes we would strenuously resist if they were to stand boldly at center stage and announce themselves under their true name. Yet when they creep up on us slowly, quietly, and virtually unobserved, like the famous soldiers with the muffled oars who appeared one morning on the Plains of Abraham, by the time we notice them it is almost too late to resist; not to mention that those of us who might have resisted at an earlier date have been three-quarters converted to the enemy cause by the eleventh hour. The creeping professionalization of college athletics is a case in point.

Which brings me to a phenomenon that has been advancing in the American land for some time now, something that might be called "creeping neutralism." Our original American neutrality had to do with religion, setting up a wall of separation between church and state. There are three principal reasons given to justify this neutrality: (1) religion is a matter of individual conscience; (2) in a religiously pluralistic society it is impractical to insist on religious standardization; and (3) government is incapable of knowing the difference between religious truth and falsity. By and large

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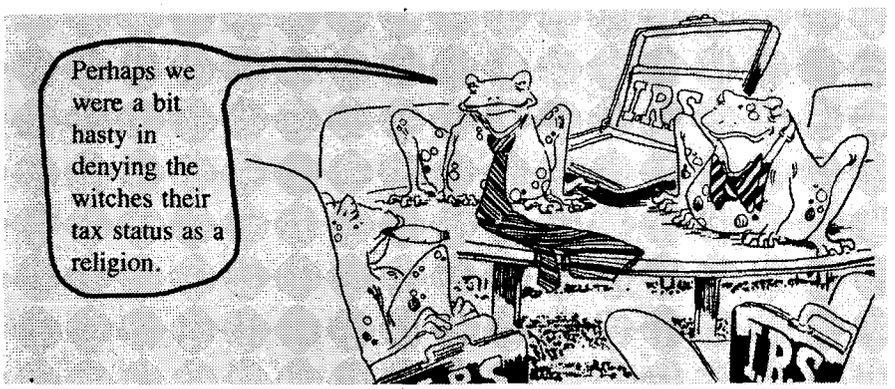

Americans have learned to live with the ideal of a religiously neutral state, and under this regime the republic has managed not only to survive but even to flourish.

I am not at all certain that we can continue to flourish under a spinoff from religious neutrality which has been creeping up on us during the past twenty years or so — ethical or moral neutrality. It is now widely held, not only among liberals and libertarian conservatives but also among non-ideological men and women in the street, that a wall of separation ought to exist between state and morals. Government, many feel, should no more impose its moral preferences on citizens than its religious preferences. And the reasons given for this ethical neutrality are essentially the same as those given for religious neutrality: (1) moral preferences are matters of personal conscience, the sanctity of which is violated when the state favors one moral value over its rival; (2) the U.S. is a morally heterogeneous nation, and if the state gets into the business of promoting the morality of one group and hindering that of another, this will be both unfair and an invitation to social conflict; and (3) since there is no objective way of determining what is true and what is false in the realm of morality, any state preference for this morality over that must be purely arbitrary.

To be sure, proponents of this newer wall of separation are not terribly consistent — at least not at this early date, at this pre-Plains of Abraham date, so to speak, when the full significance of creeping moral neutrality is not yet manifest. On the one hand, they insist, for reasons just outlined, that government ought to remain neutral on such matters, for instance, as abortion and homosexuality; on the other, they wax very moralistic when they speak of environmental protection, nuclear disarmament, ethics in government, aid to the *contras*, etc. They remain moral neutralists, in other words, until it suits their purposes to engage in moralizing themselves, whereupon they succumb to the natural human tendency to pass moral judgments, all theoretical notions to the contrary notwithstanding.

Despite these inconsistencies, moral neutralism continues to creep forward; and the further it creeps, the more I am convinced, the American republic is placed in jeopardy.

For one thing, this neutralism undermines the character development necessary for the success of our government and society. Republican institutions are not operated by computer programs but by citizens who have developed a sufficiency of the virtues required to operate them — virtues such as honesty, courage, loyalty, self-discipline, public-spiritedness, etc. If the state is debarred from promoting these virtues, if it is required to be neutral among virtues and even neutral between virtue and vice, then it is debarred from assuring its own continued existence. A republic can no more preserve itself by remaining indifferent to the character formation of its citizens than it can by remaining indifferent to the military defense of its frontiers.

For another, moral neutralism undermines the very premise on which the American commonwealth was founded. If government must be committed to the practice of ethical neutrality, then how can it proclaim and promote the belief that human beings possess "certain unalienable rights"? For this is itself a moral belief. Moral neutralism, to say no worse, is patently incompatible with the Declaration of Independence and the Bill of Rights. Which is as much as to say, it is incompatible with the legitimacy of the United States.

At first glance the doctrine of ethical neutrality seems to be the epitome of liberalism. On closer inspection, however, it is discovered to poison the very wells of a liberal society. □

OF SEVERAL MINDS Abigail McCarthy

THE ART OF COMPROMISE

RELIGION & POLITICS '88

As we turn away thankfully from the excruciatingly long pre-primary events of this year's presidential campaigns and the process is taken over by actual voters, it is well to remind ourselves that the connection between belief and politics is a question for all of us, and cannot be pushed aside as a concern peculiar to the self-anointed righteous who follow Pat Robertson. In the last few national elections and in many state elections it is not only the evangelicals who have agonized over the tension between the absolutes which form their consciences and the realities of practical and effective government.

In 1984 we had the conflict between Governor Cuomo on the one hand and Cardinal O'Connor and the New England bishops on the other, over whether

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Catholics in good conscience could vote for any candidate who differed with the bishops — not on abortion — but on the political solution to the problem of abortion in our society. At the time, Governor Cuomo defended the right of the office-holder to come to his decision in terms of his own responsibility as a public official. As I wrote at the time (*Commonweal*, October 19, 1984) it was obviously the governor's strong belief that the translation of morality into effective and sound law was the province of the politician and not of the clergy. The guiding principle was what was "plausibly possible," what would work. As long as the ultimate candidacy of Governor Cuomo remains a lingering hope of many interested in a Democratic victory this year, his speech at Notre Dame on the subject should be a basic reference.

In this election season we have had the problem of religion and politics addressed by one of the avowed presidential candidates, Senator Paul Simon of Illinois. He gave the annual lecture on religion and public life sponsored by the Cushwa Center of Notre Dame on February 16, 1987. Perhaps because there had been little media attention to his candidacy at that time, his statements went relatively unnoticed. However, although Senator Simon is not a Catholic but a devout Lutheran, his basic position is strikingly similar to Governor Cuomo's:

> Those of us in politics recognize that practical compromises have to take place. Whatever our religious moorings, few of us in political life claim any certainty that we know God's will on a given issue. In political life, compromise, that is not a compromise of principle, is not a dirty word and is essential to the process.
>
> The religious leader generally believes his or her dogmas come from God, and that makes compromise difficult. You cannot compromise what God has told you to do or to believe. . . .
>
> When the inflexibility of religious dogma is applied to political life, then practical compromises that are necessary for progress sometimes cannot follow.

It is Cuomo's argument without the fire. Senator Simon addresses the topic soberly and sensibly, sometimes in phrases that seem somewhat worn, and his solution to the sticky problem of abortion is very like the governor's. Address the causes. Of one million teenage pregnancies in 1986, according to a report of the National Academy of Sciences, four hundred thousand ended in abortion. "We know something about the teenage pregnancy pattern: Where young people are given an extra lift educationally, teenage pregnancy rates go down." And where there is a high unemployment rate there is a high teenage pregnancy rate. "Tackling issues like education and unemployment is much more complicated

and less emotionally satisfying than carrying a sign in a parade, but if the concern is genuine — and it is — then real answers should be sought, not simplistic ones."

Senator Simon, however, broadens the discussion by his understanding of why those who are too zealous in applying strict religious tenets to political problems are the way they are. He remembers his own indoctrination as a Missouri Synod Lutheran and the instructor who taught him that 95 percent of those in heaven would be Lutherans.

"The desire to be part of a small group holding truth and fighting for it against the forces of evil has appeal," says Simon. "To be part of a religious elite that has a monopoly on the ultimate truth is emotionally satisfying. . . ." He understands even as he cites some of the drastic historical consequences. "It becomes dangerous when these emotionally-charged certainties are applied to political life. . . . Northern Ireland and Lebanon are examples today. The substance of faith has given way to cultural tradition and division, and zealots on each side, applying their faith to political life in an unthinking way, kill in the name of religion."

Even worse, preoccupation with narrow moral issues may induce a kind of myopia toward gross evil. Where were religious leaders, Simon asks, when Japanese-Americans were mistreated during World War II? How silent we were, Catholics and Lutherans alike, during the butchery of the Jews! And the evangelicals? Simon gives the example, both horrifying and ludicrous, of the report of the Baptist World Alliance after its meeting in Germany in 1934. Hitler was praised as a leader who gave good example because "he neither uses intoxicants nor smokes," and had forbidden the sale of salacious literature. Baptists were advised not to be hasty in their judgment of a leader "who has stopped German women from smoking cigarettes and wearing red lipstick in public"!

And yet Senator Simon makes a point seldom made and one very important to remember in 1988. "Let us keep in mind that people can, and sometimes do, grow." He mentions abolitionist editor Elijah Lovejoy who literally gave his life to fight slavery but who at one time had advertised slaves for sale as a matter of course. He mentions Senator Strom Thurmond, "a vastly different Strom Thurmond than the man who headed the Dixiecrat efforts in 1948." He cites Jerry Falwell, once a leader in "the cause of segregation" who has grown beyond that. It is worth noting that these men changed and grew as they participated in the political process. They had been shut out of, or had eschewed, the conventional paths to power.

As today's "new people" with religious concerns move into the political process, it is up to the rest of us to help them into the mainstream and to learn the art of healthy compromise necessary to a pluralistic society. They are not going away. □

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CAMPAIGN ACROSS CULTURAL DIVIDES

CONTOURS OF THE '88 ELECTION

FRED SIEGEL

Our mental map of Republicanism is entirely out of date. The once clear-cut polarities between Main Street and Wall Street, between the Sun Belt and the Frost Belt have passed through the magnetic field of Reaganism and come out jumbled. Twenty years ago, the idea that Barry Goldwater, the scourge of the Republican establishment, could endorse George Bush, a scion of Wall Street Republicanism, would have been unthinkable. But there they were in New Hampshire, an electorally tottering Bush with a beaming Goldwater by his side; the one-time hero of Republican insurgents proclaimed Bush of Andover and Yale heir to the conservative legacy. To be sure some things don't change: Goldwater—famous for impromptu remarks, such as telling a reporter, "You know, I really don't have a first-class brain"—lived up to his reputation when he embarrassed Bush's handlers by comparing their candidate to Calvin Coolidge. Leadership, exclaimed Goldwater, isn't all that important.

Truth to tell, Goldwater may be right. The *Wall Street Journal*/NBC exit poll in New Hampshire found that only one-quarter of the Republican voters believed Bush would be a strong leader. Not leadership, but the scrambling of Republican constituencies may be the key to the 1988 Republican primaries.

Five Rockefellers, including the clan's leader, David of Chase Manhattan Bank, are among the many figures from the New York stock and banking world contributing prominently to George Herbert Walker Bush's political action committee, the Fund for America's Future. The support of Rockefellers, Cabots, and Winthrops—not to mention many members of the conspiracy theorists' favorite bogeyman, the Trilateral Commission—has led to muttering from "movement conservatives" about Bush and "re-establishment," a return to the bad old pre-Reagan days.

The Robertson people have issued leaflets about the Bush "liberals" and refer darkly, as do conservative activists, to Bush's pre-1980 membership in Planned Parenthood and "one worlder" foreign policy organizations. More important than ideology, a palpable class resentment runs through the hostility to Bush. The hard-right *Manchester Union Leader* spoke for the city's working-class conservatives when it painted Bush as "a spoon-fed rich kid, wet-nursed to success." But these were warnings with little impact in a New Hampshire transformed by a new breed of young suburban conservatives, many of whom can be described as yuppies, as can their numerous Sunbelt counterparts, and who are the core constituency for a Bush campaign.

Bob Dole, on the other hand, is the heir of the rock-ribbed Midwestern version of flinty small-town Republicanism exemplified by Robert Taft. There is a populist streak to Dole, who mocks Bush's privileged life, and who speaks of how, as a young attorney in depression-era Kansas, he had to approve welfare payments for his grandparents. Dole insists that he'll win because voters who "work for a living . . . want a president who has faced similar problems." This is the Bob Dole who has something of an implicit alliance with Pat Robertson based, in part, on the shared class resentments of their supporters.

At the same time, Dole is a favorite among many on Wall Street, who have been, like him, outspoken critics of "supply-side" economics. Dole's insistence on economic "realism" has won him the plaudits of mainline Republicans convinced that the budget deficit is the nation's number-one problem.

Bush probably has the best of this new pattern of cross-alliances. While the Dole base in the Midwest is in long-term economic decline, Bush support is concentrated in the new suburbs of both North and South that have grown the most rapidly over the last twenty-five years.

In Iowa, Bush ran the best campaign of his life and lost. He lost despite a superb organization and the best debate performances of his political career. In the week between Iowa and New Hampshire, Bush was subjected to a relentless and almost entirely negative media blitz that fastened on his self-

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conscious and largely unsuccessful effort to make himself "just folks." The vice-president concluded the New Hampshire campaign with a stumbling, sad-eyed debate performance. He left the audience with these halting words: ". . . I don't always articulate well, but I always feel and I care too much to leave now." On the morning of the New Hampshire primary (Tuesday, February 16) the newspapers and magazines were filled with premature and almost gleeful accounts of Bush's demise. Bush, said R.W. Apple of the *New York Times*, "lacks a common touch, lack[s] a clear program" and has "difficulty in conveying a sense of himself." All true, yet Bush went on to a smashing victory. Why?

The immediate explanation for the Bush triumph is that whereas Iowa is a strongly anti-Reagan state, New Hampshire is a strongly pro-Reagan state. This is true enough. But it misses the more enduring basis for a Bush-like candidacy rooted in the restructuring of American life. Bush is the candidate of new "me-generation" suburbs. The upwardly mobile strivers of the high-tech *Nouvelle* Hampshire found the vice-president to be an enormously appealing figure. If Bush had been accused of being excessively ambitious, a man who moved from job to job for the sake of his resumé, so had they. He was to those voters much as Dole had been to the farmers of Iowa, "one of them."

Johnny Carson was the first to express publicly what many voters already knew implicitly. "George Bush," said the talk show host, "is a yuppy." Why, even when he wears overalls to campaign, Carson went one, "they have an alligator emblem over the pocket." Lee Atwater, the vice-president's campaign manager and baby-boom booster, would agree. Bush, says Atwater, is plugged into youth values. Well, Bush isn't exactly a yuppy, but he is a forebear; he is an overgrown preppy.

Bush's *angst*-free enjoyment of his own wealth and privilege, his easy acceptance of a terraced society, is something "me-generation" conservatives, entranced by the *Upstairs, Downstairs* world of Public Television's Masterpiece Theatre, aspire to. "These young people," says Frank Holman, New Jersey State GOP chairman, speaking of young suburban Republicans, are "the hope of the Republican party. That's where we can eat them [the Democrats] up." They are "very ambitious," says Holman. "They want it all and they want it now. . . . They don't care if Aunt Tilly is being taken care of in the nursing home or not; Aunt Tilly better take care of herself." If, as campaign aide John Buckley has put it, Dole's painful "root-canal" style of budget-balancing economics reminds the upwardly mobile of a nay-saying bank loan officer, Bush's ruddy optimism is both a model and an emblem of their own future possibilities.

The deepest resonances between Bush and young suburban Republicans center on their parallel identity problems. Just as academics and would-be academics once rallied to Adlai Stevenson and now, perhaps only in passing, to Paul Simon, because they saw a reflection of their own personalities in those men's styles, the Republican boomers see their own problems acted out on a national stage by Bush. The boomers, argues political consultant Ralph Whitehead, "want to be somebody, but their culture and life experience no longer offer them the kind of off-the-rack identities that were available to their parents." Bush, many reporters have noted, seems similarly preoccupied with the struggle for identity. A rich man in a party which hasn't nominated a man of privilege since Charles Evans Hughes in 1916, Bush is constantly trying to show he's one of the guys, with awkward off-color remarks about women to show how tough he is. A Sunbelter to many New Englanders, a New Englander to many Sunbelters, he seems to resemble many professional boomers in having a stronger ego than identity.

"At the tone, the number of democratic Presidential candidates will be . . ."

The Bush-Dole hostilities have been characterized as a personal feud. That's true to a point. The two men have been at odds since Richard Nixon, in the midst of the Watergate scandal, chose to replace Dole with Bush as Chairman of the Republican National Committee. But just as Gephardt has played off a milder version of the economic resentments reflected in Jesse Jackson's campaign, Dole represents, in part, a toned-down version of the cultural animosities expressed by the Robertson supporters who likewise feel left out of the Reagan celebration. These divisions will not only reappear on Super Tuesday (March 8), they are sure to cast a long shadow over the future of the Republican party. Will the loser in the Bush/Dole race be able to give the other his whole-hearted support in the presidential race? And, if Bush should win the presidency would he, having alienated his party's Senate leader, be able to govern?

The growth of suburban political power is represented clearly in the rise of Michael Dukakis and somewhat more ambiguously in the case of Richard Gephardt. Both men were untouched by the passions of Vietnam and Black Power. They

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first made their mark in the wake of Watergate as procedural reformers pushing issues of concern to up-scale suburbanites, issues like insurance rate determination and health care cost containment. Political power has followed the shift of wealth and population to the suburbs. Dick Gephardt's hometown of St. Louis, for instance, lost almost a third of its population, largely to the surrounding counties, in a mere decade-and-a-half between 1970 and 1984.

In terms of wealth, urban incomes actually exceeded suburban ones at the end of World War II. Today, while suburban per capita income outstrips the cities' by one-third, the average suburbanite pays about 25 percent less in taxes. Political power has followed suit dramatically. Only a decade-and-a-half ago, the cities held a 4-seat edge (148 to 144) in Congress. Now there are 228 basically suburban seats but only seventy-nine primarily urban districts.

Gephardt has experienced this transformation directly. The Congressman started out in politics as a St. Louis alderman. His greatest accomplishment in that job, he says, was to "convince people that they should stay in the city." In fact, though, he had limited success on that score. A great many of his south St. Louis constituents moved into adjacent and largely rural Jefferson County. And in a sense Gephardt moved with them. He became the congressman of a district that incorporated both south St. Louis and the sprawling, booming, and, in presidential terms, increasingly Republican southern suburbs.

One of the high-tech companies located in the suburban section of his district, Guarantee Electric, became his model for the future of the American economy. Guided by a group of entrepreneurial engineers, Guarantee Electric, a small company, grew rapidly by moving into the expanding field of computer-aided manufacturing, a process which reduced the need for skilled union labor. In this, his Atari Democrat phase, Gephardt's favorite slogan was "managing the transition." That is, the American government imitating the Japanese should guide the process of creative destruction whereby an antiquated, rigidly organized, labor-intensive, mass manufacturing economy would be transformed into the flexible, knowledge-intensive, post-industrial economy of the future. For Gephardt, and other Atari Democrats like Colorado congressman Timothy Wirth, the Democrats need to cease stressing "fairness" and become the party of growth, the party of entrepreneurial innovation doing battle with the party of economic stagnation and big business, the GOP.

What's striking then is not that Gephardt has, as the press has noted in trivializing the issue, flip-flopped on a variety of specific congressional votes. That would hardly make him unique. More importantly, the new populist Gephardt who emerged in the Iowa caucuses seemed to have totally reversed his economic worldview. The Japanese went from model to villain, growth was replaced with fairness, and the bright future of the Yellow Brick Road was replaced with the nightmare of joblessness and economic displacement. Yet what is intriguing is that Gephardt the populist has never repudiated his earlier views. Instead, he has, FDR-like, simply layered the one on top of the other without trying to reconcile them.

Gephardt's policy switches, his enamel smooth, game-show host personality, have produced almost as much dismay as the success of Pat Robertson, he of the rictal smile. But if the first, if not the only, duty of a candidate running for national office is to get elected, what were his choices? For nearly twenty years the Democrats have been searching in vain to reach beyond the "cover-your-constituencies" politics of New-Deal, interest-group liberalism. Neoliberalism is a smash among the press corps, but the "we-must-make-tough-choices" neoliberals like Bruce Babbitt have been conspicuous political failures, their press notices notwithstanding. "Give a neoliberal half a chance," says one wag, and "he'll begin every other sentence with the word infrastructure."

What Gephardt has done through his assault on Japanese and Korean protectionism is to find a solution to the John Glenn problem. Glenn, the Ohio senator touted as the great moderate Democratic hope in the 1984 primaries, never got off the ground. The somewhat culturally conservative, disaffected blue-collar Democrats who had deserted the party for Reagan's nationalist appeal never saw Glenn's studied moderation as a reason to come home. Gephardt has used the trade issue to tap into the same anxieties about the nation's future that Reagan's anti-Communism drew on in the 1980 election. For the blue-collar losers in the transformation of the economy, Gephardt's populism brings the same message that Harry Truman employed so effectively. "All I ask," said the president from Missouri in the midst of his uphill 1948 campaign, is that you "vote for yourself, vote for your family."

So far Gephardt's flip-flops have agitated the press and his fellow candidates, but they have had little effect on the voters. There is even a hidden benefit to his switches: it solves what might be described as the Mondale problem. The new Gephardt, nicknamed the "Prince of Panderers" by *Newsweek*, has been every bit as solicitous of the Democratic interest groups as Mondale was. But unlike Mondale whose past consistency made him unable to tell the public when he had differed with organized labor, Gephardt, given his earlier Atari votes against minimum wage increases, comes off as a far more independent fellow. Similarly, his protectionism, which has agitated the editorial writers of every major newspaper, has given his campaign an air of independent honesty. On this down-home issue Gephardt, the Washington fixture, really is standing up to the "big mules."

Gephardt could be an enormously appealing Democratic candidate, a candidate who can reach far beyond the narrowly bicoastal appeal of a button-down, establishment technocrat like Michael Dukakis.

Dukakis, the product of what is effectively a one-party state, has played out his political career entirely within the confines of a managerial and highly legalistic liberalism with scant appeal beyond the boundaries of the white-collar upper-middle class. Visitors to the governor's campaign offices find its "drill-team precision" to be of a piece with the candidate's personality. They are dismayed to

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find that it is an almost apolitical operation with the atmosphere of a middle-sized law firm. Gephardt's contradictions, by contrast, bring him close to the heart of his party's popular political appeal. The planner and the populist in Gephardt are a reflection of the long-standing duality on economic issues that has characterized his party throughout the twentieth century.

The New Deal itself shifted between an emphasis on planning designed to incorporate the "big boys" into a mildly social democratic national economic policy, and a populist assault on big business monopolies. Like Gephardt himself, the Democrats have never been able to decide whether they wanted to harness the power of big business for the public good or break it up out of fear of excessive power. What united both halves, what made Harry Truman, the small businessman, also the supporter of government intervention in the economy, was a populist "the-people-versus-the-establishment" perspective that drew on both egalitarian and nationalist currents.

Like the William Hurt character in *Broadcast News*, also the midwestern son of a milkman, Gephardt is a shallow but immensely likable personality capable of romancing whomever he needs to win the election. While the Massachusetts governor stands clearly on one side of the Democrats' cultural divide— Dukakis the suburban reformer has made a career of running against blue-collar politicians—the congressman, whose district is both urban and suburban, straddles the differences. He is, in short, the kind of politician who, if he survives the Super-Tuesday hurdle, can restore the Democrats to the White House. □

WATCHING A MAN DROWN

'HOW EVERYTHING TURNS AWAY'

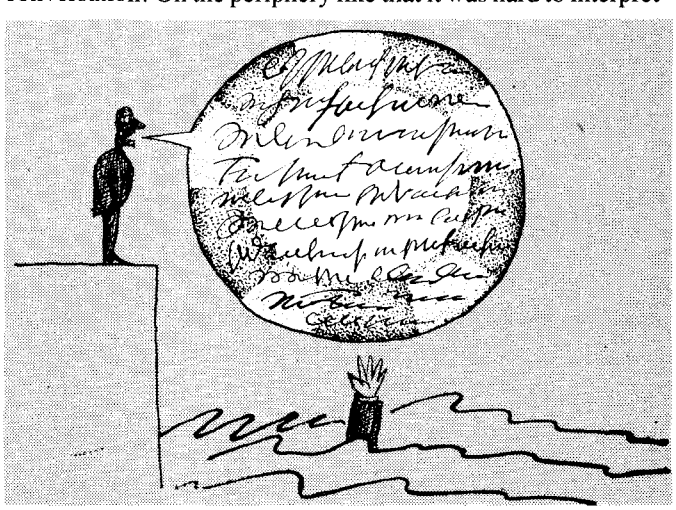
CHRIS ANDERSON

It was the Fourth of July, and hot, when my brother and I watched the man drown. I was home for a vacation, and Ted and I decided to go bike-riding in Riverdale State Park along the banks of the Spokane River just outside the city. It had been 100 degrees for a week and the ponderosa woods by the river were brittle and dry. Blasts of pine-smelling woods hit us as we rode.

We had gone farther than we intended and were soon at the Bowl and Pitcher, a bend in the river where a large cylindrical rock and a squatter, flatter rock sit side by side among the eddies and rapids. The water is very swift there. We left our bikes in the brown grass and stood on the footbridge, dipping and swaying as we talked, the sound of the rapids swallowing half our words. About two hundred yards downstream I saw a group of five or six people partying on a small strip of beach and then, out of the corner of my eye—I was turning back towards Ted—I glimpsed a man slip into the calmer water along the beach, floating and splashing on his back.

We grew up in Spokane and knew the reputation of the river. People drown right at that spot, at the Bowl and Pitcher, every year, and I said something like that to Ted. Gradually, as we talked, I began to realize that the man was in trouble. He had drifted from the calm water by the shore into the swift current and had started to struggle, waving his arms and apparently fighting against the pull of the rapids. His friends on the beach hadn't seemed to notice, or weren't reacting. There may have been one or two people standing there watching. The roaring of the water kept us from hearing the shouts, and the group was far enough away to make faces unreadable. Looking back now the moment seems frozen, a split-second freeze frame: the beach, the friends standing, the man suddenly in the current, his arms upraised.

We kept reminiscing. The scene in the corner of my eye was at first simply an irritant, hardly impinging on the flow of conversation. On the periphery like that it was hard to interpret



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exactly what was happening. Even when we stopped talking and started watching the event unfold, we were still uncertain what to make of it. From that distance, and in the enveloping sound of the river, we couldn't separate out the elements of the scene, isolate the details. There was an air of unreality about the man struggling, then panicking, then going under and back up. The rituals of death are clichéd to us now: the villainous cowboy clutches his breast and spirals down to the street. I thought for a moment that the drowning man was pretending to drown. His gestures seemed exaggerated for effect. He flailed his arms and gasped and sputtered like a cartoon character.

A friend tried to swim out to help but got caught in the current and had to cling to a rock several yards downstream. A few minutes later a girl in the group on her way up the trail told us that they were trying to get the drowning man to give in to the current and float to the rock, but apparently he couldn't hear them or was too terrified to surrender himself.

Several seconds after we finally accepted the reality of what was happening, the drowning man went under for the last time. It wasn't dramatic. He just didn't come up again. His friend on the rock seemed to be shouting; the rest of the group was by now standing on the edge of the shore, leaning over as far as they could. We weren't sure even then that he hadn't surfaced somewhere else or made it to shore. Only the sudden movement of the girl as she bolted up the bank towards the ranger station signaled his death.

What strikes me now is how little the drowning affected me at the moment. My brother was white-faced, shocked, but somehow the event was already an abstraction for me. Perhaps it simply hadn't registered. Perhaps it was the literal distance between us and the drowning man that led to the kind of aesthetic distance I was able to maintain. Perhaps all the stylized images of death I have seen on television had made me immune to the real physical fact of someone drowning. Already I was interposing a layer of words and analysis between the event and my inner life.

And this is partly why I didn't act, why I continued to stand there on the bridge doing nothing even after I realized the man was in trouble. There were simple, practical reasons for our paralysis, as we realized in conversations with friends and family later. As amateurs we couldn't diagnose the event soon enough to act. We failed to respond because we lacked experience and training in emergency situations. As it turned out, the river was so swift that even when the fire department arrived, it couldn't immediately rescue the man still stranded on the rock, and had to ask a kayaker to take out the lifeline. It took the rescue squad over an hour using a helicopter to find the body of the drowned man, which had been swept a mile downstream. We couldn't have done anything to help even if we had managed to cover those two hundred yards or so over rocks and down the bank before the man went under for the last time.

But we should have started running towards the shore as soon as we realized something was wrong. At the time we didn't know that there was nothing to be done, and that shouldn't have mattered. What counts—or would have counted—is our instinctive willingness to try to help.

Underneath the sense of abstractness I felt, underneath the simple fear— and there was fear, a fear of drowning myself— is something far more disturbing for me. My real fear was fear of embarrassment. I didn't run from the bridge and try to help the drowning man because I was afraid of making a fool of myself. In the intensity of that moment the situation resembled in my mind nothing more than a party I was afraid of crashing or a group of strangers to whom I was shy of introducing myself. What if we sprinted over there in a great show of concern and competence and found that nothing was wrong? My dread was of those strange faces looking up at me as I intruded. As I looked at the scene from a distance, the group seemed closed unto itself, self-sufficient. My instinct was to stay away from it. My sense was that I didn't belong. Even the fact of a man drowning didn't, in the split second of it happening, break through the barrier of exclusivity or privacy that I felt existed between us and establish a sense of our common humanity.

In an odd way, I felt that the drowning man had intruded in my life. My brother and I were involved in an intimate conversation. There was a flow to my words that I instinctively wanted to protect as soon as I glimpsed the struggling of the man in the river. Somehow in the first few seconds of his drowning the momentum of that thought was stronger than the momentum of the river sweeping him away.

We stopped at a Circle K on the way back for something to drink. The air conditioning made us shiver as we walked in sweating from the heat. We heard an ambulance go by as we paid the cashier, who laughed when we told her we had just seen a man drown. I guess the phrase sounded odd to her, like the beginning of a joke, or perhaps she, too, was lost in private thought and instinctively resented being interrupted.

I wonder if the drowning man felt interrupted in the midst of his terror, or embarrassed suddenly to be intruding on the lives of others. I wonder if his thoughts in the act of dying were as mundane and oddly abstracted as mine in the act of watching him. □

LeRoy Smith

Legacies

What shall we say this soldier was?
or this politician, or that thug?
or any of the rest of us
swept under Adam's rug?

We all have our hypocrisies,
which represent forgotten dreams
that others dreamt (before we were)
beside deceptive streams.

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SCREEN

ALLEN WRENCHING

FLOUNDERING IN 'SEPTEMBER'

Why did *September*, Woody Allen's latest film, die so quickly? Perhaps because it has only one redeeming feature and only one redeeming scene: the portrait of a depressive by Mia Farrow and the moment in which she explodes. Farrow plays a flounderer, one of Allen's best subjects when he focuses on a woman character. With her granny glasses and shapeless, flatttened hair, Farrow is "thirty-something," but frozen in her own big chill. She's a New York photographer who has never achieved success; her only asset is a house in Vermont. Farrow gives a gritty performance, sadly close to the lives of many lost souls of the sixties. Unlike most women in Allen's films, she gets no comic redemption—or even relief—in this somber drama.

The main contrast to Farrow's depression is provided by her mother, played by Elaine Stritch. Stritch is an ex-model, ex-showgirl, and still, at sixty, tries to be the sexy, provocative life of the party. In private, she gets one good scene too: in front of a mirror, she eyes her aging face and laments, "There's something missing here—my future." It's the only inflection in her character, which yields mostly a diagrammatic inversion of her daughter's.

Around these two and their memories slowly pace a circle of Allen characters played by favorite actors: Dianne Wiest as Farrow's friend (a woman escaping her family), Sam Waterston as a would-be writer, Denholm Elliot as an older neighbor, who loves Farrow. But Farrow loves Waterston who loves Wiest who loves.... A deadly feel affects this soap opera; few lines, in a weak screenplay, seem fresh. But the casting is also to blame. Can a director get to know actors too well—or vice-versa? What new discoveries are possible with such a stable, narrow ensemble as Allen has now gathered?

The buried family melodrama begins with Stritch who ran away with a mobster. He beat her; young Farrow shot him and has reaped a heritage of guilt and paralysis ever after. Only in her explosion does this material come alive; otherwise, it's there as static background. The film underdoes what *Nuts* overdoes with Barbara Streisand: the power of the long-buried family secret. Too bad Allen and Streisand never met as youths in Brooklyn, canceled out each other's weaknesses, and shared their strengths!

At one point in *September*, Waterston reveals of his would-be novel: "it's lifeless." No doubt Allen means it self-consciously; he wants us to see it as symbolic of one aspect of *September*, and still make the claim of a hidden life beyond the ordinary level of moviemaking. Allen here challenges his audience to confront its own expectations about the "life" of a film. But what he really demonstrates is another seduction by theory, and the way it can be used to justify any work that lays claim to a subtle aesthetic strategy. A film should be judged on its cinematic success, not on its assault on *notions* of cinematic success. In *September* Allen tries to stage a seminar on film. But teaching through example is one thing, lecturing another.

Woody Allen's greatest weakness has not been a desire to be serious, but letting trendy notions get the better of him. Take the scene in which Jack Warden, a physicist—and Stritch's latest husband—delivers a speech on the apparently meaningless nature of the cosmos. Warden manages it—barely, his credibility breaks with closing references to photons and quarks. Allen has Waterston joke about the speech later, but never questions its content. All it reveals is glib wisdom—not even shared by all physicists. You get the feeling that all Allen knows, or wants to know, about physics, is an idea that fits his morbid view of the world. The problem here isn't intellectualizing, but the thin texture of his ideas.

The entire film is shot indoors, despite the claims that the house is set in Vermont. Of course, Allen does this in part to prove a point about making an "interior" film that matches an austere, lifeless style and content. But it also reveals his usual distaste for anywhere but Manhattan. The only visitors to the house—besides the immediate circle— are New Yorkers looking for a country home. Allen here recites the creed of another New York humorist, Fran Liebowitz: "Outside? That's the distance between doormen and taxis."

Neglect of landscape, locals, and textural diversity points to the general problem in Allen's work: thinness of imagination. I would not harp on this if, in a *potential* film genius, it weren't regrettable. If Allen's bandwagon of admirers admitted this about his previous (and better) films, perhaps they wouldn't have encouraged the lack of self-criticism, even self-awareness, that produces a disaster like *September*. When an artist is told he can do no wrong, rest assured he soon will. I tried to like this film, and, midway, rooted for it to improve. But Allen hasn't grown lately. He needs a seminar less than a sabbatical.

TOM O'BRIEN

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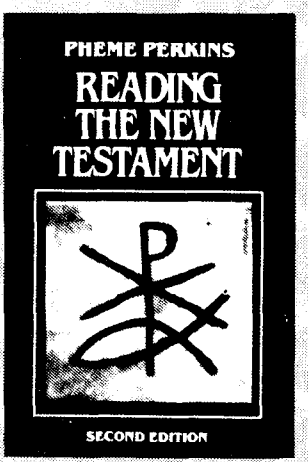

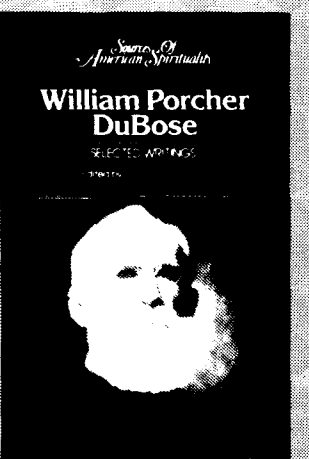

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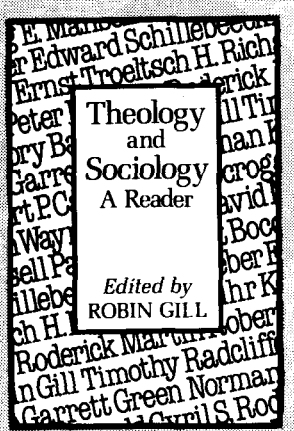

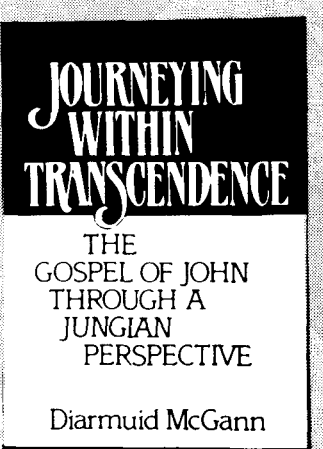

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Not Catholic enough?

JOSEPH A. KOMONCHAK

Richard Neuhaus proposes that this is "the Catholic moment" in two senses. It is "the moment in which the Roman Catholic church in the world can and should be the lead church in proclaiming and exemplifying the Gospel. This can and should also be the moment in which the Roman Catholic church in the United States assumes its rightful role in the culture-forming task of constructing a religiously informed public philosophy for the American experiment in ordered liberty." The need for the Christian churches to engage in the second of these tasks was argued at length in *The Naked Public Square* (1984), where Neuhaus saw little to hope for from the mainline Protestant churches, from his own Lutheran church, or from the religious new right and wondered if the Roman Catholic church might not be the most qualified to mediate religiously based values to the public debate.

To be able to do this, however, the church must be a church of the Gospel, and this is the burden of the new book. The theological argument is framed by counterposing two of H. Richard Niebuhr's famous types: "Christ of culture" and "Christ and culture in paradox." For Neuhaus, only the latter is faithful to the central Christian doctrine of justification, classically expressed in the *simul justus et peccator* slogan of the Reformation. Two apparently contradictory truths must be asserted simultaneously. As obligatory as it may be to reach for some intellectual synthesis of the truths, the paradox they pose cannot be solved, but only superseded by the coming of the Kingdom. The church will always remain both holy and unholy, and the paradox in which it lives must also define its relationship to the world, to which it may never be completely reconciled and which it must always remind of its provisional nature.

It is within this framework that Neuhaus makes his claim for the Catholic moment. "In truth," he argues, "the Reformation understanding of the Gospel as God's justifying grace centered in the scriptural *kerygma* of cross and resurrection is today more boldly proclaimed by Rome than by many of the churches that lay claim to the Reformation heritage." Neuhaus defends this remarkable assertion by a review of the teaching of Pope John Paul II, who stresses the paradoxical nature of Christ's redemptive work and of Christian existence, and on this basis offers a powerful and attractive alternative to the competing ideologies of liberalism and Marxism. At the same time, Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger correctly stresses in his own writings the unholy holiness of the church. And in Neuhaus's judgment, especially in the Congregation's "Instruction on Freedom and Liberation," Ratzinger has built on the doctrine of justification "the most intellectually impressive and potentially significant statement on theology and politics to have emerged from any official church source in some years." It is thus the Catholic church, in two of its most important leaders, which is most intelligently and forcefully stressing the paradoxical character of the relationship between church and world; and it is their insistence on this necessary paradox that explains and justifies the internal policies by which they are struggling to restore a sense of Catholic identity and integrity.

Neuhaus shares the increasingly popular view that the Second Vatican Council and the two popes who directed it indulged in a naive optimism about the possibilities of accommodation between the church and the modern world. The council abandoned the simplistic anti-modern attitudes and strategies of previous Roman Catholicism, but its documents were not clear enough about the alternative to prevent progressive Catho-

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lics from simply capitulating to modernity. Neuhaus offers as evidence the two theological visions that have proved most attractive to American Catholics.

The first of these marks "the progressive theological establishment" in the United States and is typified in Richard McBrien's book *Catholicism*. This theology has "bought into the controlling theological presuppositions of liberal Protestantism" and mimics a culture marked by a loss of faith in the supernatural by reducing theology to anthropology. "The movement has been from the absolutizing certitudes of the Tridentine church to the relativizing certitudes of nineteenth-century Protestant liberalism." This theology has abandoned the sectarian "Christ against culture" emphasis of preconciliar Catholicism, not in order to propose more acutely and more adequately the central Christian paradox, but to embrace the seductively comfortable positions of the "Christ of culture" type.

The other popular vision is that of the theology of liberation, typified by the early works of Juan Luis Segundo. Here the paradox is lost because the Kingdom is collapsed into a new society to be realized in this world; the church becomes simply one body among "the artisans of a new humanity," and the Gospel is abandoned in favor of the "works-righteousness" of an "unbridled Pelagianism." The "new humanity" is simply a new Christendom, this time on the left, but once again representing "the easy and false resolution of the essential paradox of Christian existence."

Neuhaus believes that Catholics need to learn again from John Courtney Murray's critique of monism and his reminder of the legitimate pluralism enshrined in Pope Gelasius's distinction between the spiritual and the temporal. The legitimate autonomy of the political order must be respected and not dissolved into a new theocracy, as political and liberation theologies attempt to do. The liberal establishment in the U.S. needs again to learn to respect the American political experiment, while at the same time having enough ecclesial self-confidence not to measure the meaning and value of the Gospel by its compatibility with the dominant and secularized culture. The new knowledge class of American Catholic intellectuals has yet to pass into a genuinely "post-liberal" recognition that the faith is governed by different cultural-linguistic rules from those of the academy and of the culture it serves. This is the real issue, Neuhaus claims, behind the recent disputes about the Vatican and academic freedom for theologians.

The book is obviously not the work of a detached and disinterested observer. It is impossible to deny Neuhaus's genuine concern for both the Gospel and the direction of American society. He offers us a theology of politics in place of a political theology. Read as a sequel to *The Naked Public Square*, this new book wishes to argue that a case can be made for the public significance of the central Christian Gospel without indulging the simplistic and unmediated claims of the evangelists of the new Right. The argument is thus conducted in an arena in which Catholics traditionally feel at home.

Books By Richard John Neuhaus

The Naked Public Square, *Eerdmans paperback, 1984, $8.95, 288 pp.*

The Catholic Moment: The Paradox of the Church in the Postmodern World, *Harper & Row, 1987, $19.95, 292 pp.*

Some serious reservations, however, are in order. I will simply note my impression that Neuhaus's theological argument at times appears to be subordinate to certain social and political options which he has made. His severest criticisms fall upon those who are tempted to support politically liberal causes. His enthusiasm for the present pope and for Cardinal Ratzinger appears to wane when their criticisms touch upon the American political experiment, to which he implies they need to give greater attention. The neat convergence between his theological argument and a neoconservative political agenda should perhaps make Neuhaus more cautious in his criticisms of the alleged cultural surrender of other theologians.

With regard to the theological analysis, one must note first the many unfair and oversimplifying summaries Neuhaus gives of the theologians with whom he disagrees. Eight pages of selective quotation are considered to suffice for McBrien's two volumes and Segundo's 900 pages. Taking these two men as types leads Neuhaus to ignore other powerful theological options. While Karl Rahner's name is introduced a few times, his massive effort at an anthropocentric rearticulation of Catholic faith is ignored. Bernard Lonergan's effort to explicate the personal and social implications of Christian conversion go unnoticed. And there is no mention of David Tracy's attempt to construct foundations for a theology addressed to the three audiences of the academy, the church, and the public order.

In turn, Gustavo Gutierrez's *A Theology of Liberation*, though described by Neuhaus as "the classic text of the movement," is discussed in a paragraph, Segundo's later multi-volume work is ignored, and the possibility that liberation theology may have entered upon a second phase is raised only to be dismissed as irrelevant to the contemporary North American scene. Even when John Courtney Murray's name is introduced, no serious effort is made to address the contemporary debate among rival claimants to his heritage. Neuhaus also has an irritating habit of pigeon-holing theological positions, so that if a theologian does not draw from his own statements what Neuhaus believes to be implied therein, it must be because of intellectual inconsistency or even bad faith.

Then there are the theological criteria which Neuhaus brings to bear. Unlike Niebuhr, he appears to argue that only the paradoxical type of church-world relationship can be sustained. He believes that the transformational type too easily collapses into the Christ of culture type.

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He appears not to know quite what to do with the "Christ *above* culture" type, which he, following Niebuhr, associates, possibly incorrectly, with St. Thomas. These choices are perhaps not surprising in a Lutheran theologian, and in an ecumenically sensitive age they should not be dismissed without serious consideration by Catholics. But it does remain somewhat paradoxical, as Neuhaus himself notes, that the moment is thought to be "Catholic" because the pope and the prefect give such a fine statement on the Reformation doctrine of justification! And one suspects that John Courtney Murray might find himself a little puzzled to find his own views associated with the same tradition.

Perhaps the basic problem is Neuhaus's assumption that the variety of ways of understanding the relationship between church and world can be judged by the sole criterion of justification. Not only is this a disputable extension of the doctrine beyond its Pauline use, but it also promotes the tendency to see all differences in theology as exclusively religious, that is, as questions of starkly opposed faith or unbelief, grace or sin, etc. One does not need to deny the fundamental significance of religious conversion to maintain that all theological differences are not reducible to that question.

Moreover, even if one wishes to maintain that the *simul justus et peccator* principle defines the church, it is quite another thing to say that it also defines the relationship between church and world. Neuhaus slides far too easily from the one paradox to the other. There may be a sense in which one can say, as Neuhaus implies, that church and world are related as grace and nature, redemption and creation, promise and present, but if there are other senses in which that is not true, the doctrine of justification, at least in certain Reformation forms of it, throws little light on the relationship between the concrete church and the concrete world.

Above all, where justification is seen simply as the paradoxical assertion of apparently contradictory truths, irreconcilable short of the eschaton, the tendency is fostered, perhaps quite contrary to Neuhaus's own intention, *to separate* the religious and the political. He argues forcefully for the autonomy of the political and against its re-sacralization in a political theology. But on both the Thomist and the transformational types of church-world relationships, that autonomy need not be denied in order for the Gospel and its grace to be redemptive in the political sphere. These alternate and not necessarily reductionistic or accommodating options deserve far more attention than they have received here.

Finally, although the word "postmodern" appears in the subtitle of the book, Neuhaus offers no real description of what he means by "modernity" nor any justification for the implicit claim that the world is now "postmodern." This increasingly popular notion means many things to many people. The closest Neuhaus comes to a description appears when he associates it with the adjective "postliberal" and invokes George Lindbeck's recent book on the nature of doctrine. Here, too, I find the option not all that Catholic, since it leaves the church and modern culture over and against one another simply as incommensurate worlds defined by their own languages and truth-claims and without the possibility of a critical mediation of their differences. Once again, the typically Thomist theological option is set aside.

If nothing else, this review should indicate that this book is provocative. There is always something to learn about one's own church from interested observers. If one may have serious reservations about Neuhaus's descriptions and prescriptions, they do make one think, and that is a rarer tribute than it ought to be. One can also agree that the public forum of contemporary America is empty and needs precisely to be filled by religiously based meanings and values. The problem with this book, and its predecessor, lies less here than on the proposal of how to clothe the naked public square. The moment may be propitious, but the response proposed here is not Catholic enough. □

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RELIGIOUS BOOK WEEK

CRITICS' CHOICES

Ann Belford Ulanov

ANN BELFORD ULANOV *is professor of psychiatry and religion at Union Theological Seminary and a psychoanalyst in private practice in New York City. She is author and coauthor with her husband, Barry Ulanov, of many books and articles.*

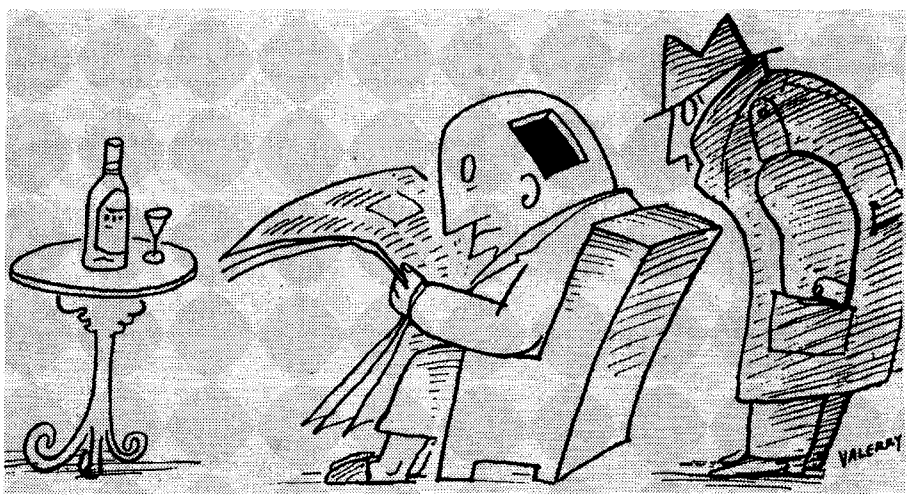
Nowhere are the mutual exchanges and contributions of depth psychology and religious faith more evident than in our intimate experiences of our own psyches and souls. There madness often hides the soul's need. There the soul's breakthrough to fresh perceptions of the holy accrues rich rewards for the psyche's sense of self and shared life with others. Among recent books that speak to these experiences, I would select four as outstanding.

Etty Hillesum's letters, written while she was imprisoned in a Nazi deportation camp, are now collected in a volume called *Letters from Westerbork*, introduction and notes by Jan G. Gaarlandt, translated by Arnold J. Pomerans (Pantheon, $14.95, 156 pp.). Here we find a woman very much our contemporary, hemmed in on every side by sufferings. She arrives in pouring rain in a leaky truck. She is crowded into a barracks with no bed of her own. She becomes part of a camp population beset with illness, food shortages, desperate problems of hygiene, such as no sanitary napkins, no proper medicine. Daily she watches people herded into boxcars on trains moving out to the death camps. Yet hers remains a resilient spirit. She thanks God for a patch of sky, for a neighbor who carries her own lot and does not load it onto others. At the end, in a boxcar herself, sitting on her rucksack, she opens to the psalm describing God as a high tower. She leaves the camp singing. All this last is written on a card thrown from the train and posted by farmers who found it. Here is a soul open to mystery in the midst of abysmal misery, whose writings give courage forty-five years later.

Separated from us by many more years, the women of Elizabeth Petroff's *Medieval Women's Visionary Literature* (Oxford University, $12.95, 402 pp.) speak across the centuries to contemporary concerns, both men's and women's, spiritual and psychological. The devotional writings of saintly women of a wide range of literary and human types tell us much about the human condition and creative potential. Petroff helps the reader to imagine how gender shapes language and ambition here as well as fulfillment in religious life. Visions gave these women a voice; through them they acquired self-esteem as well as a chance to be influential in their society. From deep within the mystic experience of a lover-God came the strength to build convents, to preach against injustice in the church, to teach, to be artists. Whoever said religion was other-worldly?

Or on the other side, who ever said depth psychology was only secular? In the newly released *Holding and Interpretation: Fragment of an Analysis*, by D. W. Winnicott (Grove Press, $18.95, 202 pp.), we are given a glimpse into the arduous work of waiting, of keeping silent, of one person holding the being of another until he can grow again around the hole in the psyche caused by psychotic breakdown. The patient, reportedly a gifted professional man, has lived a reactive life up to the time of his breakdown, without any capacity within himself for spontaneous being and, hence, initiating life out of a personal self. Breaking down thus held the promise of breaking through to find the lost capacity and to link up the dissociated sides of himself. This narrative of a short part of the analysis shows in a marvelous way how mundane analysis is, how slow going at times, both in fact and in the reading of it. Analysis is thus deglamorized. It is tough, slogging work. At the same time, this book makes clear that such work is possible for the analyst only as a lover of the precious human soul and a defender of its right to survive.

Death brings close the great questions of soul and psyche and their hopes and



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fears of afterlife. Marie Louise Von Franz in *On Dreams and Death*, trans. Emmanual Xipolitas Kennedy and Vernon Brooks (Shambhala, $17.95, 193 pp.) states unequivocally that the unconscious sees past death to another life, though one very different from what we have known. In an interview about this book, Von Franz says with humor that she understands her own affliction with Parkinson's Disease as a result of having come too close to one of God's secrets in the writing of this book. She refuses firmly to say what the secret is. What she does do is to examine the manner in which the unconscious deals with the fact of death through the archetypal themes that turn up in dreams, in near-death experiences, and in alchemical and religious texts. Her conclusion is that the unconscious often ignores bodily death, just going on depicting the individuation process as an objective psychic event uninfluenced by the wishes of the ego. Death comes to some of us, for example, as either a sinister or benevolent other, as a wolf or a golden Hermes figure. Death, we are told, comes to most of us as light streaming in or as an impending sense of cosmic loneliness. The afterlife, or our capacity to relate to it, is depicted in many symbols, and seems to depend on our efforts to build up consciousness of meaning and purpose in this life. □

Robert Orsi

ROBERT ORSI *is the author of* The Madonna of 115th Street: Faith and Community in Italian Harlem, 1880-1950 *(Yale paperback), and is currently studying the devotion to St. Jude in the United States for a book tentatively titled* The Private Prayers of Vulnerable Women. *He teaches at Fordham University at Lincoln Center.*

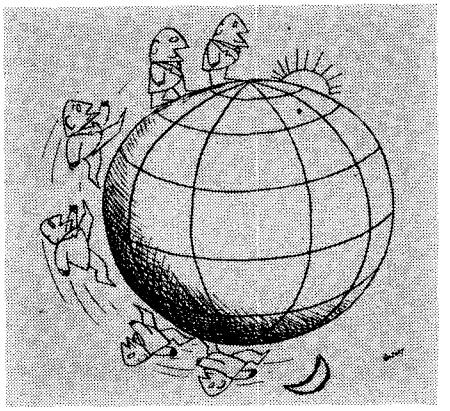
Historians have learned in the past two decades to prize what was once despised. We have been occupied with folklore, popular piety, rituals, myths, material objects of all sorts, and even, in historian Robert Darnton's phrase, "the traditional language of gestures." This has demanded new heuristic tools: borrowing from other disciplines, we have learned to read old texts in new ways and to identify new kinds of texts.

Caroline Bynum's text in *Holy Feast and Holy Fast: The Religious Significance of Food to Medieval Women* (University of California, $29.95, 419 pp.) is the ascetic body of medieval women mystics. Professor Bynum offers a complex study of the symbolic meanings of eating and not eating in the religious experience of spiritual virtuosi like Catherine of Siena and illuminates the connection between food and women's power and powerlessness in a male-dominated church.

The religious experience of Christian women always raises the question of Mary, who is the subject of Michael Carroll's *The Cult of the Virgin Mary: Psychological Origins* (Princeton, $25.00, 226 pp.). Professor Carroll asks two good questions: why did Mary's cult begin when it did in the fifth century? And why does Mary appear where and when she appears? The book was sharply criticized in one prominent Catholic popular journal recently as "reductionist," which is an unfair charge. Wayne Proudfoot, in his study of *Religious Experience*, distinguishes between "descriptive" and "explanatory" reductionisms. Proudfoot says that scholars of religion are bound to describe religious phenomena in the terms used by people experiencing them, but at the point of analysis, other categories and explanations are appropriate and necessary. Carroll's analysis is Freudian, his descriptions of the apparitions are precise, and his interpretations are provocative.

Art historian Eleanor Munro's *On Glory Roads: A Pilgrim's Book about Pilgrimage* (Thames and Hudson, $17.95, 284 pp.) is a multidisciplinary and comparative study of the gestures and rituals of religious journeying. Ms. Munro set out on pilgrim trails, east and west, in search of the origins of pilgrimage in the ways humans inhabit and understand nature. She brings to her extraordinary analysis the perspectives of anthropology, archaeo- and ethnoastronomy, iconology, and art history.

God is encountered in the city as well



as beneath the stars and planets. Jack Kugelmass's *The Miracle of Intervale Avenue: The Story of a Jewish Congregation in the South Bronx* (Schocken, $17.95, 231 pp.) is one of the best books on urban popular religion I have read. The South Bronx is as much a terrain of the imagination as it is an actual place. At the center of Kugelmass's book is Moishe Sacks, the leader of an orthodox synagogue in a devastated neighborhood: Sacks keeps his congregation alive by narrating its precarious present in the light of Torah. Kugelmass's book should inspire others to study the religious history of the South Bronx.

Richard Gilman's beautiful book *Faith, Sex, and Mystery* (Simon and Schuster, $16.95, 253 pp.) has been my *vade mecum* this past year: it is a powerful and moving account of one modern man's spiritual journey. It is also a vivid and valuable glimpse into the anxious and creative culture of New York's Catholic intellectuals in the 1950s, when the city seemed a place imagined by Graham Greene or Mauriac and there was that odd grace in the confessionals of simple, but always urbane, priests.

So why don't Catholics study history? At a time when the two leading American Catholic schools of theology are liberation theology and narrative theology, one might suppose that these sorts of precise analyses of popular religion would be considered essential reading. Yet most Catholic graduate schools of religious education or spirituality consider themselves quite complete without a historian on their faculties. If theology is about men and women's experience of God, then this would seem to be the place to begin. □

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Elizabeth A. Johnson

ELIZABETH A. JOHNSON, C.S.J., *is associate professor of systematic theology at The Catholic University, and a member of the Catholic Theological Society's committee on academic freedom and ecclesial responsibility. She is also a consultant to the U.S. bishops' committee on priestly formation.*

For Catholic theology, the 1960s was the decade of the church (who are we as a community?), followed by the 1970s as the decade of christology (who is it we as church follow?). However, the prediction that the 1980s would be the decade of God (who is it on whom we ultimately set our hearts through Jesus Christ?) has failed to materialize, as theologians have been painfully side-tracked into debates on intra-ecclesial concerns. Yet the heart of the theological enterprise remains exploration into God. Sensing the inadequacy of classical theism, some fascinating works of the past year have carried on this exploration, thinking the divine nature and attributes anew in the face of the modern secularity and massive suffering of our world.

Systematic and far-ranging in scope, Sallie McFague's *Models of God: Theology for an Ecological, Nuclear Age* (Fortress, $10.95, 224 pp.) first delineates the sensibility needed for life to survive and justice to flourish on this earth; then retrieves the challenging metaphor of the world as God's body; and finally generates a corresponding trinitarian vision of God as Mother, Lover, and Friend (the equivalent of Father, Son, Spirit). Classical themes such as the transcendence and immanence of God emerge with new intelligibility from McFague's constructive efforts. Her invitation to radical reflection on the central doctrine of belief will influence the field for years to come.

Searching for ways to speak credibly of God in the midst of terrible, undeserved suffering, liberation theologian Gustavo Gutiérrez interprets a key book of Scripture, *On Job: God-Talk and the Suffering of the Innocent* (Orbis, $8.95, 136 pp.). Drawing upon an international company of exegetes, he demonstrates how Job spoke rightly of God, both in his bold expressions of protest, as well as in his repudiation of lament in discovering the God of gratituitous love. Job's two-fold language of prophecy (attacking the unjust situation in the name of God) and of contemplation (communion and delight in the God who delivers) points the way for oppressed peoples to address God.

God's relation to suffering is also the theme of Gérard Rossé's *The Cry of Jesus on the Cross: A Biblical and Theological Study* (trans. by Stephen Arndt, Paulist, $8.95, 145 pp.), written for the non-specialist. Influenced by Jürgen Moltmann's *The Crucified God* (Harper & Row, 1974), Rossé uses

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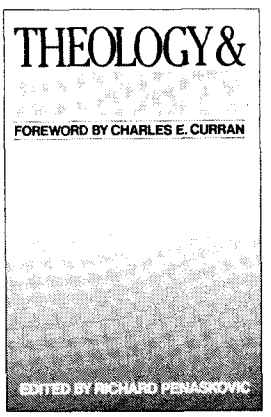
critical methods to analyze Jesus' abandonment on the cross. The depths of that incredible moment reveal that Abba is a God of compassion, in solidarity with all the abandoned ones of history. In *Motherhood and God* (Chapman, $14.95, 147 pp.), Margaret Hebblethwaite likewise emphasizes the compassionate love of God our Mother through the filter of her own experiences of giving birth and raising children. Her insights break open the traditional mold of the patriarchal doctrine of God.

While the biblical idea of *kenosis* has been much used in christology, Geddes MacGregor applies it to the very being of God (*He Who Lets Us Be*, Paragon, $8.95, 194 pp., newly issued; originally 1975). Omnipotence then becomes modeled not on dominative, sultanic power but on self-giving love; and the God who creates, governs, and saves is envisioned as a self-emptying Being whose loving self-limitation makes room for us to live.

All of these works attempt to think God anew in relation to a world which is experiencing more the divine absence than presence. □

New Horizons in Religious Publishing



The foreword by Charles E. Curran sets the stage for this timely collection of ten essays exploring the relationships between theology and authority. Although the central focus of the book concerns issues in Catholic theology, the relevance of the book to Protestants—whose denominations perpetually experience the same kind of inner conflicts—is readily apparent.

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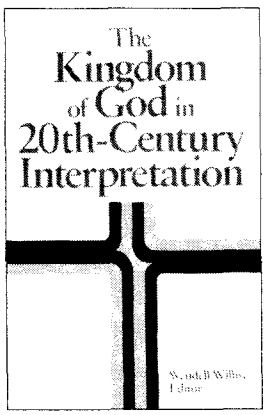

Perhaps no theological issue has generated as much discussion in New Testament scholarship as the "Kingdom of God."

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F. Forrester Church

F. FORRESTER CHURCH *is the pastor of the Unitarian Church of All Souls in New York City. His most recent books are* Entertaining Angels (Macmillan, 1987) *and* The Essential Tillich *(Harper & Row, 1987). Three other books,* The Seven Deadly Virtues, Everyday Miracles, *and* The Macmillan Book of Earliest Christian Prayers *are forthcoming this year.*

When a book, without any obvious pretensions, can be read in an evening and continue to perk through my mind for weeks, I know that something important is happening. The book is *Inventing the Truth: The Art and Craft of Memoir* (edited by William Zinsser, Houghton Mifflin, $16.95, 166 pp.) with essays by Russell Baker, Annie Dillard, Alfred Kazin, Toni Morrison, and Lewis Thomas.

Thomas's essay, all by itself, is worth the price of admission. "To begin personally on a confessional note, I was at one time, at my outset, a single cell. . . . I do not remember this, but I know that I began dividing. I have probably never worked so hard, and never again with such skill and certainty." A religious essay? Absolutely.

With wit and wisdom, Thomas restores awe to the awesomeness of creation. In an interdependent age, the most important ethical insight is that all of us are intimately related to one another. Having traced life as we know it back to the Urbacterium, he optimistically concludes, "I don't agree with this century's fashion of running down the human species as a failed try, a doomed sport. At our worst, we may be going through the early stages of a species' adolescence, and everyone remembers what that is like."

All the essayists are wonderful, but the others whose thoughts stick with me are Russell Baker, who almost left both himself and his mother out of *Growing Up*,

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and Annie Dillard, who observes that anyone who writes about her own life spends so much more time reflecting upon it than living it, that in many ways our reflections upon a moment of experience have more moment than the experience itself.

Surely the authors didn't have this in mind, but their book inspired me to return to the Gospels, pre-eminent examples of "inventing the truth." I read them with new appreciation and joy.

Two other books stick in my mind. First, *The Blessings of Imperfection* (Beacon Press $16.95, 205 pp.). Here, Peter Fleck, an investment advisor who was called to the ministry at the age of seventy-five, spins his own, blessedly unself-absorbed memoirs of grace-filled moments. I suspect that this is a collection of sermons. If so, a justifiably maligned genre has won new life.

William Bouwsma's *John Calvin* (Oxford, $22.95, 310 pp.) presents a curious juxtaposition of pedestrian writing and charismatic thought. His penetrating analysis of Calvin's creative confrontation with both the labyrinth of late-medieval philosophy, and the abyss threatened by the humanism of his own schooling, puts many of our own fears into historical perspective. A thoughtful, and thought-provoking, book. □

Nell Gifford-Martin

NELL GIFFORD-MARTIN *studies art history at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.*

Historically, religion and art coexist in unpredictable and various ways, determined in part by religion's constant recognition — hostile or programmatic — of the power of images to move and form persons. Art historians routinely encounter works that can only be understood in light of religious contents and motives, and their studies sometimes verge on theological exegesis. In the nineteenth century, philosophers like Hegel, Schelling, and Schleiermacher were fascinated by the interconnections of these two kinds of human experience that resist full expression in words. Lately, however, a flurry of books on religion and art has appeared that reflects yet another approach to the knotty tangle of relations between the two. Neither exclusively art-historical nor strictly philosophical, they range between the two, trying to sustain simultaneously the serious attention to concrete particulars that constitutes art history and the reflective attention to meaning that may be termed religious.

A basic sampler/introduction to the emerging field is a 1984 anthology edited by Diane Apostolos-Cappadona, *Art, Creativity, and the Sacred* (Crossroad, $15.95, 340 pp.). It is organized into five categories that accurately reflect the breadth of the topic and suggest some of the tensions within the field: Artists: The Spiritual Dimensions; Art Historians: The Religious in Art; Historians of Religion: Art in Religious Traditions; Philosophers and Theologians: Reflections on Art; Religion and Art: Interdisciplinary Vision. This anthology comprises both excerpts from classic writers in the field such as Wassily Kandinsky and Ananda Coomaraswamy, and more recent essays prepared or revised for this edition. It concludes with a bibliographic essay directed to the study of Christianity and the arts, and a considerable introductory bibliography useful for those working in Hindu, Buddhist, Jewish, or Islamic studies, as well as areas of Western Christianity.

The bibliographic essay is reprinted in a second anthology, *Art as Religious Studies* (Crossroad, $17.95, 247 pp.), jointly edited by Doug Adams and Diane Apostolos-Cappadona. This collection does not attempt the cross-cultural reach of the first volume, nor does it address critical theory of the field. Rather, it concentrates on visual arts in Judaism and Christianity as they may supplement or become the focus of religious studies and practice.

Parallel to these anthologies are two volumes of edited excerpts. *Paul Tillich: On Art and Architecture* (Crossroad, $24.50, 275 pp.), edited by John and Jane Dillenberger with translations by

ARTHUR SIMON

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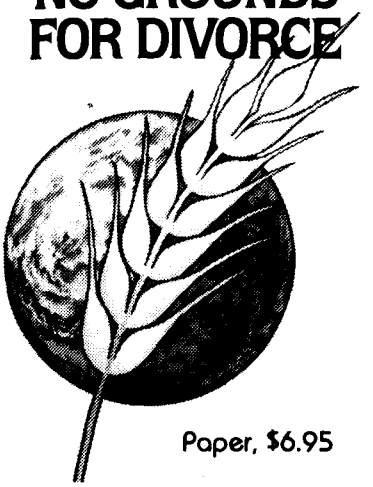

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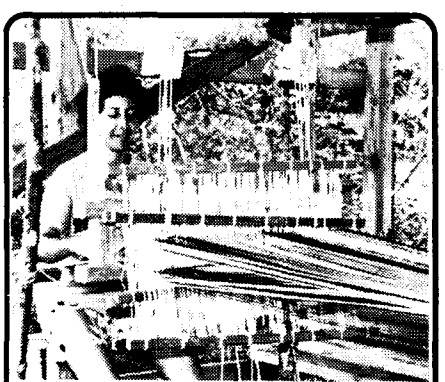
Robert P. Scharlemann, serves its material well, allowing the reader full access to the thinking of a great twentieth-century theologian of culture working within a clearly-defined confessional position. *Mircea Eliade: Symbolism, the Sacred, and the Arts* (Crossroad, $10.95, 185 pp.), edited by Diane Apostolos-Cappadona, is an appropriate pendant to the Tillich volume. The poet and historian of religion, Eliade, who reflects on Indian art and Brancusi with equal ease, balances nicely the probing existentialist theologian who considered Picasso's *Guernica* "the most Protestant picture in modern times."

These four books display both range and gaps. Potentially — and ideally — the discussion is global and comparative, although it often falls short of that ideal and frequently lacks critical rigor. Tillich and Eliade demonstrate how art may amplify and illustrate, but they leave *art* in a hyphenated situation, the handmaiden of something else. The reader who by now has become lonely for the thing-in-itself may find splendid satisfaction in Richard Wollheim's Mellon Lectures, recently published as *Painting as an Art* (Princeton University Press, $45.00, 384 pp.). A leading philosopher of mind, Wollheim demonstrates the rich questions that might arise from art itself, even for philosophers of "soul." □



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Robert L. Wilken

ROBERT L. WILKEN *is the William R. Kenan Professor of the History of Christianity at the University of Virginia. His most recent book is* The Christians as the Romans Saw Them *(Yale University). He is presently writing a book on the Christian Holy Land, to be published by Yale University Press.*

The first new book I read in 1987 was Robin Lane Fox's *Pagans and Christians* (Alfred A. Knopf, $35, 799 pp.) published in January. Had I not been asked to review it, I might still be slugging away at it. It is long and dense, and though at times the argument flounders, its pages overflow with spellbinding details, some of which were unknown to seasoned scholars in the field. No writer deals with the interaction of Christianity and the society and culture of the Roman world with greater learning and scholarly panache than Lane Fox who, parenthetically, is known to another world of readers through his articles and a book on English gardening. His thesis is revisionist. By relying so heavily on the sophisticated literary and intellectual exponents of Christianity, historians have missed the militantly countercultural features of the new movement that account for its huge success.

Lane Fox is interested in the public arena, in temples and oracles and speeches of emperors. About the same time, I read a work on domestic and family life in late antiquity, a collection of essays edited by Paul Veyne, the French social historian, *A History of Private Life: From Pagan Rome to Byzantium* (Harvard, $29.50, 688 pp.). Only parts of this book deal with Christian history, but because the essays cover Byzantium and early medieval Europe as well as late antiquity, Christian attitudes and practice appear on almost every page — in sections dealing with sexuality, family, domestic architecture, clothing, etc.

To the general reader, perhaps the most impenetrable epoch in Christian history is the fifth to the ninth centuries in East and West, a period that has long been dominated by specialized monographs. Judith Herrin's *The Formation of Christendom* (Princeton University Press, $34.95, 456 pp.) is a learned, challenging, and gracefully written interpretation of the transition from antiquity to the Middle Ages. It deals with East and West and the rise of Islam in a synthetic account. On Eastern Christianity in particular I should also mention J.M. Hussey's *The Orthodox Church in the Byzantine Empire* (Clarendon Press, $59.00, 320 pp.), a history of Christianity in the Byzantine world, and the delightful collection of Syriac lives of women saints, *Holy Women of the Syrian Orient*, edited by S.P. Brock and Susan Ashbrook Harvey (California, $28.00, 197 pp.).

Two other works in Christian history caught my eye: Bouwsma's Life of *John Calvin: A Sixteenth Century Portrait* (Oxford $22.95, 288 pp.), a welcome respite after the tidal wave of books on Martin Luther several years ago, and James Davison Hunter's *Evangelicalism: The Coming Generation* (University of Chicago, $19.95, 314 pp.), a sociological study of students and faculty at sixteen evangelical colleges and seminaries. On the basis of such pedestrian information as the changing face of college catalogues, Hunter draws an unexpected portrait of future evangelical intellectuals.

Of all the books I read this year, however, it was a small work on the poet Cseslaw Milosz that I kept coming back to. Ostensibly a book of literary criticism, *Cseslaw Milosz and the Insufficiency of Lyric* (University of Tennessee Press, $8.50, 92 pp.), by Donald Davie, keeps bumping up against religious and theological themes. As Davie penetrated more deeply into Milosz's poetry, he was led to reflect on the relation between truth and community. Genuine truth, he

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argues, is found by submitting to the discipline of a particular community, just as art can only discover the universal by way of indirection. He cites Milosz's poem:

> And anyone who wants to take his brush and try
> To paint the Earth must not look straight up at the Sun
> Or he will lose the memory of all he's ever seen,
> With only a burning tear to fill his eye.
> Let him kneel down and press his cheek in grass and then
> Look till he sees the beam the Earth reflects back upwards.
> There he will find all of our lost, forgotten treasures;
> Stars and Roses, the setting and the rising sun.

It did not surprise me to learn, after reading Davie, that he had also written a book entitled *A Gathered Church* and edited *The New Oxford Book of Christian Verse*. □

Paul D. Hanson, *The People Called: The Growth of Community in the Bible* (Harper & Row, $31.95, $18.95 paperback, 564 pp.). Working with the theme "community," Hanson succeeds in displaying the diversity of theological traditions found in the Bible and in unfolding the continuity between the two testaments in his presentation of the rich pageant of community life in the biblical stories. Hanson identified three cardinal characteristics of community: righteousness, compassion, and worship. Though this triadic notion of community constantly undergoes modifications, it persists from earliest times through the early rabbinic and Christian period. Hanson shows that this heritage can make a profound contribution to our world so much in need of justice, compassion, and peace.

Two other biblical theologians contribute thematic studies of moment though both are far less comprehensive than that of Hanson. J.P.M. Walsh, S.J., *The Mighty from Their Thrones: Power in the Biblical Tradition* (Fortress, $12.95, 206 pp.), works with key words pertinent to the idea of power, e.g., justice, judgment, and vindication. Walsh explores the imaginative use of these terms in the biblical stories to illustrate Israel's self-understanding, and to reveal the God of Israel and the God of Jesus as the same God on the side of the oppressed and outcast.

J. Christiaan Beker, *Suffering and Hope: The Biblical Vision and the Human Predicament* (Fortress, $4.95, 94 pp.), looks to the biblical witness of both testaments for enlightenment regarding the mystery of suffering and the power of hope. Beker wrestles with the tension between the pervasive presence of suffering and belief in the goodness of the God of creation. He demonstrates that the dominant scriptural view is a meaningful integration between suffering and hope rooted for the Christian in the death and resurrection of Jesus.

In a completely different vein, *The Literary Guide to the Bible*, edited by Robert Alter and Frank Kermode (Harvard University, $29.95, 678 pp.), approaches the biblical text from the hu-

Helen Kenik Mainelli

HELEN KENIK MAINELLI *is associate professor of biblical theology and spirituality at Holy Names College, Oakland, California. She is the author of* Designs for Kingship *(Scholars Press, 1983) and a commentary on the book of* Numbers *(Liturgical Press, 1985), and with her husband edits a viewsletter of, by, and for Christian laity,* The Ordinary Way.

What the Scriptures say for life today remains the issue for readers of the Bible. During the last several decades, two methodologies of research have contributed greatly toward facing this issue, the biblical theology movement and the new literary criticism. The result is a greater awareness of the authority of the Scriptures in everyday life, and especially an appreciation for the continuity between the Jewish and Christian writings.

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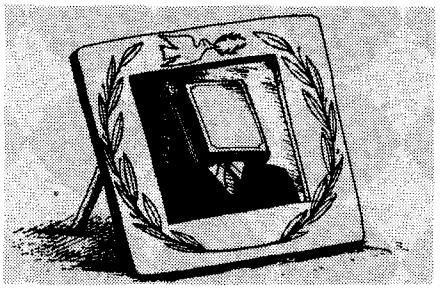

man and literary rather than the theological perspective. This series of essays focuses on the power of the narrative style, on the techniques of biblical prose and poetry, and most significantly on the literary harmony between the testaments. The value of this book cannot be overstated. It provides a guide for reading biblical texts, directed to the nonscholar, long needed to override the sentimentalism and historicism that have confused the intended meaning of the collected writings. The purpose of the essays is not to teach about living spiritually or otherwise, but rather to push away the blinders which obscure the very worldly experience of God and the beautifully human way of articulating that experience witnessed in the texts themselves.

One step beyond this literary critical study of the biblical narratives is *Congregation: Contemporary Writers Read the Jewish Bible*, edited by David Rosenberg (Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, $29.95, 526 pp.). So often people wonder that the biblical canon is closed, and therefore excludes contemporary experience. Does not life today continue to reveal the goodness and presence of God? *Congregation* is a collection of essays done by recognized Jewish authors, each focusing on a book of the Hebrew Bible and expressing creative insights by the writer. The result attests to the spirituality of the generations following their ancestors in faith, some more profound in their grasp of biblical truths than others. The work is an experiment worth attention and emulation. □

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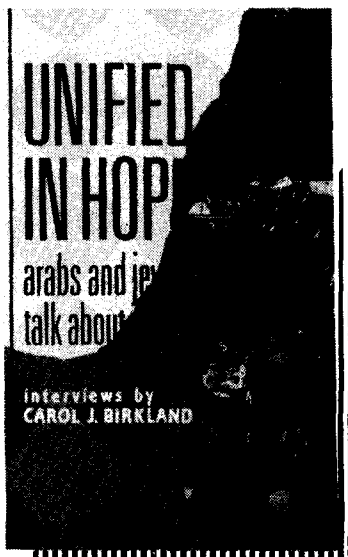

Ted Peters

TED PETERS *is professor of systematic theology at Pacific Seminary and a convenor of doctoral studies in theology at the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley, California. He writes the "Theology Update" column for* Dialog *and is the author of* Futures — Human and Divine *(John Knox Press). He is editor of* Cosmos as Creation *(Abington Press).*

Arthur Peacocke is hitting his stride. A biochemist turned Anglican priest, he is professor and director of the Ian Ramsey Centre for theology and science at Oxford. For a decade his publications have sought consonance between what the church says about God's creation and what scientists say about nature. His new book, *God and the New Biology* (Harper & Row, $19.95, 197 pp.), follows in this train. Always clear, here Peacocke tells us how recent discoveries have transformed biology into a new form and, further, that it is time for Christian theologians to pay attention. Against certain tendencies toward reductionism within the discipline of molecular biology, Peacocke argues for a holistic understanding of complex relationships. The human person, for example, is an evolutionary emergent, a complex whole which cannot be reduced to its chemical components or its primate past. With regard to God's relation to the world, Peacocke argues that our understanding of ongoing creativity within the evolutionary advance requires that we emphasize divine imminence and *creatio continua*. God is constantly at work in the law-chance dialectic, bringing new realities into being. This leads to a sacramental view of the cosmos. Whether the reader can agree fully or not with Peacocke's theological commitments, we can only applaud the steadfast earnestness with which this scholar pursues the integration of human knowledge, both secular and sacred.

A cross-disciplinary book of a different type which is well worth reading is *Did Jesus Rise from the Dead?*, by Gary

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Habermas and Antony Flew (Harper & Row, $14.95, 190 pp.). Antony Flew, philosopher of religion known for his neo-Humean skepticism, says "no." Gary Habermas, a Liberty University theologian, says "yes." The book records the debate. It also adds commentary by Wolfhart Pannenberg, Charles Hartshorne, and James Packer. Historical arguments are raised, evidence is weighed, philosophical assumptions are argued. Both sides agree that the historicity of Jesus' resurrection is decisive for establishing the credibility of the Christian claim. This is important. In an attempt to defend Christianity from the attacks of historical science, many theologians over the last century have sought to insulate themselves by ghettoizing faith into a strictly personal or existential quarter which is independent of objective judgments. The result was a Christian faith so subjective that it could posit nothing regarding the nature of the world. The doctrine of creation went out the window. Eschatology was divorced from history. The truth question was bypassed. By arguing the historicity of Easter, this book re-asks the question of the truth or falsity of the Christian claim to say something about the reality which encompasses us all. It is not a great book, but definitely interesting, as much for its assumptions as for its arguments. □

Avery Dulles

AVERY DULLES, S.J., *professor of theology at The Catholic University of America, is the author of many books including* Models of the Church, Models of Revelation *(both Doubleday Image paperbacks), and* The Catholicity of the Church (Oxford, paperback).

At length Catholicism in this country is acquiring some sophisticated and moderate writers. One of these, George Weigel, in his very substantial *Tranquillitas Ordinis* (Oxford, $27.50, 489 pp.), complains that the theology of war and peace in recent years (including the bishops' pastoral) has degenerated into an abstract debate about nuclear weaponry. Seeking to retrieve the classical Augustinian-Thomistic tradition with the help of John Courtney Murray, he holds that the quest for peace must be integrated into the search for a rightly ordered political community.

The Lutheran theologian-journalist Richard John Neuhaus in *The Catholic Moment* (Harper & Row, $19.95, 292 pp.) detects evangelical and even Lutheran accents in the teaching of John Paul II and Joseph Ratzinger as they summon Catholicism to regain its authentic selfhood. Whereas Weigel opts for a "transformationist" model of public theology, Neuhaus leans more toward a model of "church and world in paradox." Yet the two authors mount similar critiques of Protestant-Catholic liberalism.

Readers seeking to delve deeper into the Catholic theological tradition will welcome Ratzinger's own *Principles of Catholic Theology* (Ignatius, $24.95, 398 pp.). In this collection of dense and learned articles, questions relating to faith, history, Scripture, tradition, apostolic succession, and the nature of theology are handled with originality, responsibility to the past, and ecumenical sensitivity. For those inclined to dismiss Ratzinger as the *Panzerkardinal*, this book could be an eye-opener. The conservatism of this book is neither rigid nor authoritarian.

Patrick Granfield, known for his earlier book on the papacy, now presents *The Limits of the Papacy* (Crossroad, $15.95, 207 pp.). Drawing on a broad range of recent literature, Granfield shows how Catholicism can benefit from attending to voices other than the papacy; for example, the college of bishops, the local churches, the theologians, the sense of the faithful, and ecumenical dialogue.

Although Granfield provides some information about Charles E. Curran, more needs to be said. The basic text should probably be Curran's own *Faithful Dissent* (Sheed & Ward, $9.95, 287 pp.), which presents the documentation and Curran's own apologia. A thorough analysis of the theological, pastoral, and academic cases for and against Curran is

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available in the fourteen-author symposium edited by William W. May, *Vatican Authority and American Catholic Dissent* (Crossroad, $16.95, 208 pp.). Beginning with two chapters by Archbishop Roger M. Mahony and Curran himself, this collection maintains a consistently high level.

As a final word, I would advise thrifty students of theology not to resist the temptation to acquire *The New Dictionary of Theology* edited by Joseph A. Komonchak, Mary Collins, and Dermot A. Lane (Michael Glazier, $49.95, 1112 pp.). It is up-to-date, reliable, clear, and informative; not conservative, but solidly traditional. □

Agnes Cunningham

AGNES CUNNINGHAM, S.S.C.M., *is professor of patristic theology and early church history at Mundelein Seminary, University of St. Mary of the Lake. The Thomas More Association will be publishing her forthcoming book on Mary this spring.*

Reading for enrichment has led me, this year, to discover several new authors. *Feet-On-The-Ground Theology: A Brazilian Journey* by Clodovis Boff (Orbis Books, $8.95 [paper], 185 pp.) is the account of a four-month trek to the rubber plantations in the Amazon jungle. Boff — Leonardo's older brother — is a serious theologian with unerring pastoral intuitions. He gives us a look *from within* at a poverty so extreme that it must blossom into beauty; at oppression so violent that it already announces the coming Kingdom. This book inspires true compassion and hope from beginning to end.

A journey of another kind is described in *Edith Stein: Life in a Jewish Family* (Institute of Carmelite Studies, $10.95, 548 pp.). This work is the first in a projected series that will bring the collected works of Edith Stein, known in Carmel as Sister Teresa Benedicta of the Cross, to the English-speaking world. The actual autobiography is preceded by several pages of reminiscence by Edith's sister, Erna. It is followed by a chronology that covers the years 1916-1942 and the certificate of Edith's death in Auschwitz. This account will surely take its place with other great spiritual classics that inspire and challenge us all to reflect on God's presence and action in our lives.

Out of the ever-growing corpus of books by or about women, two emerge as representative of differing points of view. *The Inside Stories*, edited by Annie Lally Milhaven (Twenty-Third Publications, $12.95, 269 pp.) is a collection, in interview form, of the stories of "13 Valiant Women Challenging the Church." It is a significant, if disturbing, work. In some ways, this book is a disappointment. The contents are not new, and the events and persons have received widespread attention in the news media. Too, there is, for all practical purposes, only one story; the thirteen women speak with the same voice.

Daughters of the Church, authored by Ruth A. Tucker and Walter Liefeld (Zondervan, $15.45, 552 pp.) is a comprehensive study of "women and ministry from New Testament times to the present." Tucker and Liefeld are colleagues at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School in Deerfield, Illinois. Their approach is generously inclusive: historical, international, interdenominational. They bring a refreshing tone of objectivity and insightful sympathy to their assessment of the experience and contribution of women in Christianity.

Whether or not *The Chalice and the Blade* is the "most important book since Darwin's *Origin of Species*," as Ashley Montague claims, this work by Riany Eisler (Harper & Row, $21.95, 261 pp.) challenges the prevailing notions about the beginning of human history, the Judaeo-Christian tradition, and male-dominated social systems in a new way. The author's invitation to share her futuristic vision of a world at peace and her prescription for attaining it will not easily be dismissed. □

Coming: Special issue on education
April 8, 1988

CORRESPONDENCE

(Continued from page 130)

February 21, 1988 (First Sunday of Lent) to February 5, 1989 — will also include quotations from the 1986 pastoral letter on mission, *To the Ends of the Earth*.

We do not see this approach as just one more clever way to get the pastoral letters talked about. If these letters and their way of thinking are to become part of the common Catholic vocabulary, those who preach and teach (in the home, in the classroom) must find how closely knit these letters are to the Scriptures — precisely as the church reads those Scriptures Sunday by Sunday. GABE HUCK
Liturgy Training Publications

Restraining euphoria

Fitchburg, Mass.

To the Editors: While David Carlin, Jr. perhaps wisely counsels us to restrain our euphoria even as the tentative glimmers of a brave new world of U.S.-Soviet relations beckons ["This, Too, Shall Pass," January 15], his analysis is not comprehensive. For starters, to scan only the history of the U.S. and the Soviet Union is to succumb to superpower ethnocentrism; since ninety-five percent of the world's population is neither in the U.S. nor Soviet Union, one can be certain that most of them consider the arms race to be an obscene "danse macabre" whose grisly pirouettes they are compelled to witness.

In fact, this outrage (although often unexpressed) goes for the majorities in the superpowers themselves. The people of both countries, as Eisenhower himself prophesied, are beginning to want peace so much that the elites are scrambling to accommodate this new yearning. Even in terms of the philosopher Hobbes, whom Carlin frequently refers to, self-interest would seem to fall on the side of peaceful coexistence rather than paeans to Realpolitik.

Finally, I think the author fails to acknowledge "the new moment" that the Catholic bishops noted in 1983 regarding the nuclear arms race. While the Star

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Wars contraption waits in the wings with an estimated price tag of $400 billion to $1 trillion, while worldwide human misery rises to a piercing crescendo, we, the people, confront the possibility of relegating the Cold War to "the ash heap of history." While rationality may say "Improbable," the hearts of millions are yelling "Yes."

R. JAY ALLAIN

AIDS & contraception

Douglaston, N.Y.

To the Editors: One can substantially agree with your editorial, "Getting the Point" [January 15] concerning the U.S.C.C. document about AIDS and the use of contraceptives, and still believe that dissenting bishops have at least a point. While I fall completely on the side of the administrative board on this matter, I sincerely believe a public disagreement among the bishops is a welcome change from the lock-step public stance which was the traditional posture of this group.

Those of us around the mid-century age mark have no difficulty recalling the teaching we received from all clerical sides about the immorality of contraceptives. I can recall fearsome verbal duels in my living room with clerics and Catholic laymen (including some editors of *Commonweal*) when friends of mine began serious questioning of Catholic teaching on contraception. Who can forget the condemnation Dr. John Rock received from Catholic theologians when he, a Catholic, invented and commercialized the "pill"?

It would now appear, however, that the church as the "people of God," along with most Catholic moral theologians, has decided that under many circumstances contraceptives are not immoral. It further appears that the elements of Catholic episcopal leadership who share that belief have the political problem of explaining this shift in teaching to Catholics who well might have suffered physical and/or psychological harm from adhering to the traditional teaching.

Catholic historians have been adept in rewriting history: Catholic teaching and conflict over biblical studies, slavery, democracy, relations of Catholics to Jews and non-Catholics.

It is not to *Commonweal*'s editorial credit, while rightfully noting the strength of the Catholic Conference report, not to mention its historical context as opposed to a statement on the subject earlier in the century.

It is good to see the bishops recognize the importance of the relationship of the physical and the moral. Would the same group of bishops counsel teaching of contraceptive use in Central and South America and the Philippines, for the same conceptual reasons as given in their statement? Or do they not believe these to be life-death situations?

It further appears *Commonweal* cannot forego the language of a previous generation(s) in its utilization of the phrase "church teaching." If overwhelming proportions of Catholics—laypeople, clergy, nuns, brothers, and even theologians—consider contraceptives moral in many circumstances, can the traditional teaching affirmed in this document still be considered "church teaching"? If so, what is the meaning of church as "people of God"?

I believe our church leadership must face this situation and open a new dialogue on sexuality with the possibility that mistakes, while well-intentioned, might previously have been made about contraceptives.

JOSEPH MULHOLLAND

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